

# THE · HOUSE OF · SHAME

CHARLES · FELTON · PIDGIN





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**THE HOUSE OF SHAME**







# The House of Shame

*A NOVEL*

In Which is Told a Story of Love and Marriage,—not the Marriage Preceded by Days of Loving Courtship, the Ring and the Kiss, and the Congratulations of Relatives and Friends, but the Mating that Takes Place in the Great American House of Shame,—the Mormon Church.

BY

CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN

AUTHOR OF "QUINCY ADAMS SAWYER," "BLENNERHASSETT,"  
"STEPHEN HOLTON," AND OTHER NOVELS



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I INSCRIBE THIS BOOK  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
**Harriett Beecher Stowe**  
WHO, IN  
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN  
WROTE THE WORDS THAT FOLLOW  
ABOUT *SLAVERY*, WHICH WORDS  
I HAVE MADE APPLICABLE TO  
THAT OTHER SOCIAL CRIME, *POLYGAMY*

“The mothers of America, and its patriotic men and women, cannot know what *Polygamy* is; if they did, such a question, as to what Christian duty should be, could never be open for discussion, and from this arose a desire to exhibit it as a *living, dramatic reality*.”

CHAS. FELTON PIDGIN







## PREFACE

This is a story of love and marriage; not the old-fashioned marriage with its preceding days of loving courtship, the ring and the kiss, the congratulations of relatives and friends, and the certificate attesting the tie that binds until broken by human or Divine law.

No, instead, the plural marriage contracted in secret; congratulations by no loving friends or relatives, no ring, no certificate; a marriage by which a man takes two or more wives to his bed and board. What are the results of such a system of marriage? To show them, in their stern reality, this story has been written.

Blotting out State lines, the United States is *a Nation* of monogamists. Public morals, and the law, require that a man shall have but one living, legal, wife. Those who contract marriages contrary to this law are termed bigamists, and are punishable by its provisions.

*Plural marriage is Polygamy!*

*Polygamy is Bigamy!*



## PREFACE

Why should not all bigamists pay the penalty prescribed by law?

It is contended by a certain sect that such marriages are part of their religious belief, and that the Constitution of the United States guarantees religious freedom.

That Constitution does guarantee religious freedom *to the individual*, but a combination of individuals may adopt certain customs, and religious ceremonials, contrary to public policy which may injuriously affect the morals and detract from the happiness of other individuals.

A man may *believe* in human sacrifice but he has no right to combine with others and carry his belief into practice. He may *believe* that all men should give one-tenth of their income to God, but he has no right to combine with others and force such a contribution. He may *believe* that a man should be allowed to have more than one wife. He takes his first wife openly, within the limits of the law. But if he takes a second wife, a third, or more, he does it secretly, thus acknowledging the supremacy of a law which he evades. The second, and other wives, unless they are considered as paramours only, are entitled to an open marriage as well as the first wife.

*Are plural marriages open?*



## PREFACE

No, they are contracted in secret, and kept secret. The plural wife does not bear her husband's name — she is only one of a fraternity and is called "Sister." The children, too, are nameless, for to admit the relationship would be a public acknowledgment of the plural union.

*Is the plural marriage really a marriage?*

If it is a legal marriage, then the husband is guilty of bigamy. If it is not a legal marriage, then it is illegal and an illicit union also.

In some of the States and large cities there are complete official registration records of births, deaths, and marriages. In the great majority, these records are wanting or are defective. In all the States they should be complete and accurate. In such records all plural marriages, and nameless children, would be registered as illegal and illegitimate. But, it will be asked, how can reports be obtained of secret marriages and their offspring? That question will be answered later.

The divorce laws of the 48 States are dissimilar. A law-breaker in one State should not be considered a law-abiding citizen in another. How can these heterogeneous conditions in the 48 States be co-ordinated? Manifestly, only by uniform laws on the subjects considered, and these must be *National Laws* passed by Congress. To pass these



## PREFACE

laws, Congress must be enabled by an Amendment to the Constitution. It should be simple in form but comprehensive of all possible details to be covered by legislation.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENT

To the Constitution of the United States.

*Congress shall have power to legislate concerning the registration of births and deaths, the solemnization of marriages, and the granting of divorces.*

Read the book. Decide in your mind if it discloses a disease in the social body of the nation. Then consider the proposed amendment. If you think it will cure the evils, work for its adoption.

C. F. P.

WINTHROP, MASS.,



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# The House of Shame

## CHAPTER I

### A GENTILE HOME

MADISON BRIANT was born in Connecticut where, it is supposed, the severe Blue Laws made its people so moral and religious that the *nomen* "land of steady habits" was not a misnomer. He had four brothers,—Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Monroe,—who were satisfied to hold the plow and swing the scythe; but at the age of sixteen, the spirit of *wanderlust* permeated Madison, and he ran away from home. To many landsmen even the sea is a magnet and young Briant was not long in Boston before he was shipped as cabin boy on a vessel bound for San Francisco. The gold fever was at its height and he had dreams of a fortune and of his return to his old home a rich man. Then he would marry and settle down. He had no intention of feeding on husks and sleeping with swine. He would be a prodigal son, but he would return



with gifts, and not as a suppliant for food and raiment.

Like ants burrowing in the earth the old forty-niners with pick and shovel were at work looking for nuggets which, in their imaginations, were as large as apples. The more credulous insisted that some had been found the size of pumpkins. Pumpkins made a golden pie—but what a golden pie those nuggets would make. Madison joined a party. He had a natural aptitude for cooking, and had learned much while on the ship. So he made coffee and slapjacks for the party of six and was to have an eighth of the proceeds. He worked all day with the others and did the cooking besides, which may account for his reduced lay, but it was probably due to the fact that he was a minor, and unable to fight for a larger share.

But the size of the share would have made little difference. "Pay dirt," much less nuggets, was not found in large quantities, and the high cost of living swallowed up the scanty proceeds. One by one the party dwindled away as they sought new fields until Jack Larrabee and Madison found themselves in possession of the claims.

One morning Madison overslept. When he awoke he looked for Jack, but he was not in sight. He called loudly, but there was no response.



Then a sickening fear seized the boy. Jack had deserted him, and he would never find his way back to San Francisco.

But the New England spirit is strong even in its youth and Madison set about his preparations for breakfast, which was to be a lonely meal, with despair for a dessert. He was sitting on a flat rock eating, but unmindful of the flavor of the food, when a voice called out:

"Hello, Maddy, I'm just in time. I'm most tuckered out an' hungry enough to eat roast dog as them Indians did that we came across."

"But where have you been? I thought you had gone for good."

Jack scowled, then laughed quietly. "That warn't very complimentary of a chap that had given his word to stick to yer. But you're young, Maddy, an' 'taint ter be expected you'd act just like a grown-up."

"You had a right to go, if you wanted to," said Maddy. "They all look out for Number One — why shouldn't you?"

"That's easy said, Maddy, when I'm back again, but you wouldn't have felt so if I hadn't come back — now, would you? Own up now, honest Indian."

Maddy's face reddened. "Forgive me, Jack.



I was frightened to death and I haven't got over it yet. I'll never doubt you again, and I'll stick by you till the end."

"Well, the end's coming pretty soon, I reckon."

Maddy shivered. "The flour's most gone and I fried the last bacon this morning. I'm glad there was some left for you."

"Don't worry, Maddy. I got up early and wandered off. I kept a going an' finally I came to a river. It might have been a river if there had been any water in it, but it was dry as a bone, an' I'm mighty glad it was."

Maddy looked at Jack inquiringly.

"You want to know why that dried up river tickled me. Well, I'll tell yer. When the water came down it brought lots of gold dust with it, an' when it ran off or dried up, it don't make no diff'ence which it was, it left the gold behind. Maddy, our fortin's made sure as we're both sinners."

This is not a mining story, so it is only necessary to say that Jack's expectations were more than realized. They ransacked the river-bed for its precious dust and, later in the mountain side, found the nuggets also. They were small in size, but when they were added to the gold-dust Jack exclaimed: "That's a purty valerable mountain,



ain't it, Maddy? — an' half of it's yours."

"That's too much," said Maddy.

"No, 'tain't nuther; pardners is pardners, an' when there's only two it's half an' half."

They reached San Francisco and put their find into money. Then Jack said, "I'm going back agin." But Madison had realized what he deemed a fortune and he began to think of home and mother, and particularly of a Miss Melissa Somerby who had wished him God-speed when his four husky brothers and the villagers had laughed at him for talking about making his fortune when there was a good living for him right at home.

He was a passenger and not a cabin boy when he came home on a ship that had just brought out another large company of gold-seekers. How small the village looked when he saw it again. He had a warm welcome at home and Melissa said that she had always known that he would make his fortune. For months every available box and barrel in the grocery store was occupied by the greedy listeners who came to hear his wonderful stories of life in the diggings, and he gave them the impression that lumps of gold were as common in Californy as rocks in the village pastures.



Madison and Melissa were married when he was twenty-three and she twenty. The Briant house was crowded, for Washington and Adams had married and brought their wives home, so Madison went to live with Mr. Somerby and Mrs. Somerby, for their house was large and there were only two children, Melissa and her elder sister, Priscilla, at home, their only brother, John, having a farm of his own. Two children were born to Madison and Melissa, two boys named Jackson and Harrison to please his father, but they fell victims to an epidemic of scarlet fever that swept through the village. The mother was nearly heart-broken. Women have been called "the deadlier of the species." There are women who are sirens and vampires, but there are millions who are pure, true, and noble, and the great majority should not be classed with, nor judged by, the baser part. No love can compare with that of a mother for her children, and a mother bereft of her offspring has feelings akin to those which must inspire the angels in Heaven.

Just after the little bodies were laid away for their eternal rest there came a letter from Jack Larrabee. He had made his "pile" and a big one too, he said, and he was going to settle down in 'Frisco. He had bought a hotel but wanted



a partner to run it. Wouldn't Maddy come out and take hold with him. There was another fortune in the business. Then the *wanderlust* fever struck Madison again. He asked his wife if she would go with him, and her answer was, "I will go where you go, Maddy." He made his preparations at once. Before leaving he gave his father three thousand dollars and each of his brothers five hundred. He offered Mr. Somerby a thousand, but the old gentleman refused it.

"Ye can give it to 'Cilly, if you want ter, but me and mother have got enough for all our wants."

But Priscilla, too, refused the donation.

"I've never been beholden to anybody and I don't mean to be."

"But your father supports you," argued Madison.

"Does he?" queried Priscilla sharply. "I've done most of the house work and some farm work for years and father says I'm worth more than my board and clothes. But if you are so rich you must give some money away, there's my brother, John, with a large family —"

"That settles it," said Madison. "John shall have the money."

The good-bys were said and Madison and



Melissa sailed away never to see the old homes and their parents again. We read that the builders of the Tower of Babel were separated and sent in all directions to the farthestmost parts of the earth; but if all those who have left home and parents in search of fame and fortune were gathered together, the builders of the Tower would compare with that multitude as does a mole-hill with a mountain.

Jack's hotel was roughly made, but it was large and roomy. Melissa was charmed with the sunny, flower-laden country and the new, active life. She was a fine cook and a good manager, and Larrabee's never ran short of patrons.

But Madison had not found his right vocation yet. He had been a smart scholar, and while living at Mr. Somerby's had written many articles for the country newspaper. He was not of much service at the hotel, for Melissa ran the establishment and he did not like to take orders from her,—he, an independent gentleman of means. He told his wife she was working too hard; that he would build a house and they would have a home of their own. This plan would have been followed, but an acquaintance had started a newspaper called *The Golden Gate Gazette*, and asked Madison to become one of its editors. So the



home-building was postponed and Madison found the path in life which suited him and for which he was suited.

In the latter part of the year 1889 a gentleman was seated at his desk in Salt Lake City in the Territory of Utah. On the desk before him was the latest edition of a newspaper called *The Salt Lake Star*. If we look over his shoulder, as he examines the pages, we shall see at the top of the fourth page a line which reads, "Madison Briant, Editor-in-Chief." We will follow him to his home, a fine mansion on Second South Street, and meet his wife and children. Melissa, when we first met her, a healthy country girl, then an active business woman, now an invalid, with an incurable disease. There is a son, a youth of sixteen, named Franklin. His father had wished to name him Van Buren and keep up the presidential succession, but his wife objected. She thought Benjamin Franklin the greatest American that the country had produced (as many others do) and that name had been given to the boy. A girl of fourteen, named Gertrude, completed the family roster.

And what is this son of Connecticut, with his New England idea of the proper relation of men



and women as regards marriage, doing in this home of the Latter Day Saints? He has no sympathy with those who believe in and practice polygamy. This is a Gentile home. The father says grace before meals; on Sundays he and his family (his wife when able) attend divine service in the Presbyterian Church.

In this home is the New England atmosphere, — a beloved wife, more dearly loved now that her stay on earth may soon end, children who know a father's and a mother's love. There is no mystery about life in this Gentile home. To friends and acquaintances, "This is my wife, my son, my daughter." He has no "other house." After supper the father, mother, and children meet in the parlor for an hour of companionship. When the children were younger this was called children's hour, and both Franklin and Gertrude knew Longfellow's poems by heart. Six days in the week Madison Briant sat at his desk and wrote editorials upon the live topics of the day. The one to which he gave the most attention was that of polygamy,— the system of plural or "celestial" marriage,— which formed a fundamental feature of the Mormon religion. Against that system, which he deemed immoral and degrading both to the men and the



women who practiced it, he wrote continually,—using history, argument, sarcasm, even supplication, that the evil might be removed from the land.

We have seen a Gentile in his Home; we will now visit a Mormon in his House; for that cannot be called a Home, which has several wives, with a separate house for each, and only one husband. Could he answer, if asked which was his home?



## CHAPTER II

### A MORMON HOUSE

**J**ASON ORME was born in Vermont, the State from which Joseph Smith went, a poor boy, to become later a prophet, and the founder of a religion. From the same State came Brigham Young, who was destined to take up Smith's work and found a State, with the new religion as its bulwark. Smith was born in central Vermont near the Connecticut river; Young, in the southern part of the State, near the Massachusetts line, while Orme's birthplace was in the far north, only a few miles from Canada. His father, Barnard Orme, was a man of gigantic stature and prodigious strength. His farm was large, but much of it was barren soil and gave but a meager living to the family of four sons, of whom Jason was the youngest. His three brothers had married and forsaken their parents, leaving Jason, a boy of ten, as their only helper.

Barnard Orme became discouraged and sought that complaisant but deadly friend that stupefies sensations, but increases rather than removes, the



causes of trouble. With liquor in the house, the overworked, disheartened wife became a devotee. Then came a quarrel, which ended in the mother's death. When the husband came to his senses and realized the crime that he had committed he fled to the woods, despite the storm of snow and the intense cold that followed it.

Jason had never been to school, but he had that inborn shrewdness which often wins in an encounter with mere knowledge of books. He was innocent of his mother's death, but suspicion might fall on him. Taking some food, he started West not knowing or caring where his path might lead. Months later, when the snow melted, the body of his father was found, and near him the blood-stained ax with which the deed had been committed.

The youth walked on, begging food when he could not get work. At last he came to the town of Palmyra, in the State of New York. There was great excitement in the place. A young man named Joseph Smith had discovered some golden plates, the location of which had been pointed out to him by an angel from Heaven. Smith even asserted that he had been visited twice by God and His son Jesus, and that he had been told to go out into the world and preach a New Dis-



pensation,— that Christ was coming to reign over the world, and that Smith must prepare the Kingdom on Earth for him. His assertions were met with ridicule and open hostility; but he persevered. He was uneducated, and the plates were written in a language that no one could read. But, as he said, the angel gave him a glass that enabled him not only to read but to translate into English whatever was engraved on the plates, and an edition of the “Book of Mormon” was published and distributed. Smith was considered to be another Baron Münchhausen, and the Book was declared to be founded upon a story written by an eccentric clergyman named Solomon Spalding. The Mormons denied this, but it was not until 1884 that the original manuscript of Spalding’s work was found and shown to be entirely different from Smith’s translation of the plates.

Young Orme learned that Smith was from Vermont, as was also a young man named Brigham Young, who had become one of Smith’s adherents. To them he told his story, and he was urged to join them. He had no home, no friends, no hope in life. To him had come friends, a home on earth, and a future home in Heaven. He embraced the new faith with all the ardor of youth. He was naked and they gave him clothes; he was



hungry and they gave him food; he had no hope and they held out to him a promise of happiness, for all eternity, in Heaven.

One of Jason Orme's houses in Salt Lake City was in the northern part. He had three other houses, for he was a polygamist and the husband of four wives. Since the passage of the United States law against polygamy he had been obliged to break up what was, in reality, a harem, and segregate his wives in separate houses. He was a wealthy man and could afford this. In fact, it was the possession of money that encouraged and sustained polygamy. The poor Mormon had to be satisfied with one wife, not because he did not wish to live up fully to the tenets of his Church, but because he was unable to support more than one.

One of Jason Orme's plural wives lived in the house provided for her with her only child, a daughter named Flora. She was Jason's youngest wife. A beautiful woman when sealed to Jason, a man of sixty, her daughter possessed more than her mother's lovely physical charms. A blonde, with the golden hair, blue eyes, and peach-like complexion that distinguishes such of her sex, she was "a thing of beauty."



Flora had been born and had lived until she was eleven years old in the richly furnished home inhabited by the four wives. Since the enforced exodus her mother and she had lived in a small house comfortably but inexpensively furnished; and she often wondered, child-like, why her mother, so much younger and prettier than his father's other wives, should have so poor a house. Her father had ten sons and five other daughters, but since the segregation, she had seen them seldom.

"Mother, why doesn't father come to see you oftener?" asked Flora.

"He is very busy with his Church work. He has been made one of the Twelve Apostles."

"He is your husband now, isn't he?" persisted Flora, with the natural curiosity of a child of fourteen.

"Certainly, child, when we were sealed it was for time and all eternity."

"Did the Prophet — you know whom I mean — Brigham Young, have as many wives and children as father?"

"More, many more. During his life he had seventeen wives and fifty-six children."

"Wasn't that horrid!" exclaimed Flora impulsively.



"Hush, child, you must not criticise God's viceroy on earth. He only followed the precepts of our religion and of the Bible, which commands the children of God to increase and multiply."

"Mother, when I grow up, shall I have to marry a man who has other wives?"

"That will be as God wills. He says we must be content with the condition in which we are placed."

Flora did not reply, but she remembered that she had read the same words in a book that Gertrude Briant had lent to her. She had hidden it in her room and read it at night after her mother was asleep. The title was "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the language that her mother had used had been applied to the African slaves.

Finally, she looked up and said, "Mother, I'll make my husband so happy he won't want another wife."

"You are too young to understand, Flora. We who are sealed to living husbands are to become the daughters of Heaven, and live for all eternity with them. It is every man's duty, the Church commands it, that he should thus open the portals of bliss for as many wives as he can support in this world."

Flora had been brought up strictly, according to



the rules and beliefs of the Mormon Church; but she had seen her mother's lonely life, and inwardly rebelled against a religious system that made a woman a wife, while a law made by man prevented him from acknowledging her and living in the same house with her. Where she and her mother lived was not a home — it was only a house. She had often contrasted it with the home of Gertrude Briant. On one occasion she had been present during the hour spent by Mr. Briant with his wife and children. She had seen his love and tenderness for them, and a great want surged into her heart for a father's love, and a husband's love and care for her mother.

Intuitively she reasoned that something was wrong with her religion, but she dared not speak of it to her mother. Even in the book that Gertrude had lent to her, the one about the poor slave who was beaten to death by his cruel owner, she had been taken to happy homes, even among the lowly slaves. To her childish reasoning it seemed as wrong for a husband to put away his wife and child, and neglect them, as it was for a slave-owner to sell a mother to one person and her child to another; for when she, herself, should become a wife she would be separated from her mother. To her mind came a dim recognition



of the resemblance between Mormon polygamy and African slavery. That recognition was to become brighter as she became older.

She wondered if Uncle Tom was more unhappy as a slave than she would be as the wife of a man who had other wives. He had told his brutal master that he could take his life but he would not sell his soul. Could she save her soul if she became a plural wife? To whom could she turn for comfort — in whom could she confide?

In one of her rambling walks she had met a young man. Her hat had been blown off by a stiff breeze and he had rescued and returned it. He was a Gentile. He had told her his name was Franklin Briant. He had asked hers and she had said, simply, "Flora." Her mother had cautioned her not to mention her father's name. That meeting had led to another, not so accidental, and to her acquaintance with his sister, the loan of the prohibited book, its midnight perusal, and a heart full of uncertainty and misgivings.



## CHAPTER III

### LOVE MISPLACED

FRANKLIN BRIANT was about to open the portieres and enter the room where his father was sitting by the couch upon which his mother lay when his ear caught the name "Flora." He stopped and listened, looking back to see if he were observed.

His father was still speaking. "Yes, Melie, I think it is a shame that such a beautiful girl as Flora Orme should one day be forced to marry some long-bearded old bishop or apostle, and maybe only a plural wife at that."

Mrs. Briant replied. "Yes, she is a beautiful girl. I'm glad she doesn't come here very often. I'm afraid Frank will fall in love with her. How did you find out her last name? Frank said the only name she gave him was Flora."

"Her mother is one of Jason Orme's plural wives. I'll tell you how I found out. Tom Harrod, who keeps the big market, is a Mormon; but he is willing to sell to Gentiles, so he advertises in our paper. I went in the other morning while



he was busy filling an order. His back was turned to me and he didn't hear me come in. 'That's for Mrs. Jason Orme,' said he, as he passed the bundle to his assistant. The fellow must have winked, for Harrod turned suddenly and saw me. Then he said, sharply: 'You heard what I said, Williams? — that is for Sister Florence.' 'Where does she live?' asked William. 'On Sixth North street, last house on the right,' and then Harrod said he was at my service."

"But that didn't tell you that Flora was sister Florence's daughter."

"No; but a week ago I was driving through Sixth North street and I saw Flora come out of that last house on the right."

Franklin waited to hear no more but burst into the room as if he had just arrived.

"Say, Dad, I'm feeling rusty. This is a fine day, and if you are willing, I won't go back to the office but take a tramp instead."

"All right, Frank," said his father, "but keep out of the Endowment House." He laughed as he uttered the words.

Franklin thanked him, and turned to leave the room, but as he drew aside the portiere, he said, "I'm no Mormon, and I shan't go there for a



wife when the time comes for me to have one."

"You heard that, mother? Don't worry about Frank's falling in love with Flora. He admires her for her beauty, as I do myself, but he'll marry a Gentile when the time comes."

His wife changed the subject. "Are you going to make an editor out of Frank?"

"No. He doesn't take to the business — any part of it. He wants to be a lawyer. What do you think of this idea,— sending him East to college and then to law school?"

"I wish you would, Maddy. You can afford it, and although I shall miss him dreadfully, he must have a vocation in life."

"I had to drift into mine," remarked her husband. "Now that you approve it, I'll give the idea more thought."

He had no fear that his son would fall in love with a Mormon girl, even if she were beautiful; but his wife, as she lay alone, could not get rid of the presentiment that her son's name and that of Flora Orme were to be linked together, in some unknown way, in the future.

Could the mother have followed her son, she would have had good reason for her presentiment. Franklin turned his steps to the North and kept a straight line ahead until he came to Sixth



street. Into this he turned and walked slowly along until he came to the last house on the right. Without hesitation, he rapped upon the door which, after some delay, was opened by Flora herself. Without waiting for an invitation to enter he stepped in and closed the door behind him.

"Where is your mother? I wish to see her alone."

Flora opened a door and disclosed her mother seated in a chair at the back of the room.

"Pardon me, Flora, I will see you before I go and explain why I am here."

He entered the room and closed the door behind him.

"Do I address Mrs. Florence Orme?"

"My name is Sister Florence."

"You are Flora's mother?"

No answer was given to the question.

Franklin was not disconcerted, but went on:

"My name is Franklin Briant. My father is editor of the *Star*. You, no doubt, have heard of him."

Still no reply. Her husband had told her that Madison Briant was a foe to the Mormon Church, but that God would punish him eventually, to the glory of the Saints.



“ I came to ask you a question. Do Mormon girls ever marry Gentiles? ”

“ Not unless they become apostates and are excommunicated. Then they are no longer Mormons.”

“ But Protestants sometimes marry Catholics. The high priest gives a dispensation, I think they call it.”

“ The Mormon Church does not give its children to unbelievers. But why this strange question? ”

“ I have met your daughter Flora a number of times,—the first time by accident. I am too young to marry yet and so is she; but I have fallen in love with her, and as I am what you call a Gentile, I thought it was only square and honest to come and tell you before I asked her to be my wife.”

Sister Florence smiled — such assurance in a beardless boy, and he the son of his father, the Church’s enemy. Then her expressions became stern.

“ That can never be, Mr. Briant. Your father would cast you off. I would never consent, nor would our Church. In only one way could she become your wife,—if you joined our Church.”



"I won't do that," said Franklin, doggedly.

"For my daughter's sake, Mr. Briant,—I may say out of regard for your own safety,—see my daughter no more. If you do, I shall appeal to your father."

"My father won't interfere."

"You may disobey your father, but my daughter will obey her mother." She called loudly, "Flora! Flora!"

The girl entered the room.

"Flora, Mr. Briant has come to say good-by. He is going away and you will never see him again."

The girl stood speechless.

Franklin stepped forward and took both her hands in his. He pressed them warmly and Flora felt something in the palm of her hand. She closed her hand upon it nervously.

"Now go to your room, Flora. I will see Mr. Briant to the door."

When Flora reached her room she unfolded the scrap of paper, on which was a time and a place appointed for their meeting the next day.

The next morning Sister Florence did two things that seemed very strange to her daughter. She wrote a letter, then she went out and mailed it, refusing Flora's proffered service. That after-



noon Editor Briant received a letter which astonished him greatly. It read:

"MR. MADISON BRIANT:

"Your son Franklin has met several times the Mormon girl named Flora. Yesterday afternoon he called at her residence on Sixth North street. Is this with your knowledge and consent? If not prevented, it may cause an innocent girl much sorrow.

"A MORMON MOTHER."

That evening he placed the letter in his wife's hands, with the words: "From her mother. She's a lady."

Mrs. Briant read the letter. As she handed it back to him, she said, "And Franklin?"

"Goes to college as soon as arrangements can be made."

"Shall you mention the letter to him?"

"Not a word," and he tore it into small pieces.

"To do so would only develop antagonism. I will even appear to be his accomplice."

"How so? You do not mean it?"

"Oh, yes. He would not like to write to her at her home, for her mother would know it. I will tell him if he wishes to write to any one in this city to send the letters, under cover, to me."

"Maddy, will that be honest?"



"It will be effective, and that is the main thing in such a case."

Sister Florence felt sure that Mr. Briant would control his son's love-affairs, during his minority at least, so she offered no objection to Flora's taking her usual walk. For herself, going out had no attraction. She would not visit any of her husband's other houses and her father lived too far away for her to see him without making a journey. Her own mother was dead and she, naturally, had no filial affection for her father's three living wives.

The home is said to be the foundation of our nation, but that is not a home when it is halved, cut into three pieces, quartered, or more minutely subdivided. A Mormon child can truly say, without blasphemy, that "in my father's house are many mansions."

Flora had destroyed the piece of paper that Franklin had left in her hand, but the written words were held fast in her memory. She walked listlessly about, for the time fixed for the meeting had not yet arrived. She was leaning against a fence that enclosed a thriving orchard when a closed carriage, that was being driven swiftly, came to a sudden stop before where she was standing. A voice from within said,



"Flora."

She sprang forward with a glad cry.

"Franklin."

She recoiled, and her cheeks paled when a face appeared at the carriage window.

It was her father! Perhaps he had not heard the name she had spoken; perhaps he did hear, but attached no particular significance to it. But her manifest trepidation and whitened cheek could not escape his attention. It did not, but he asked no questions and made no comment. He opened the carriage door.

"Come in."

Flora could not refuse and she took a seat beside him.

"You were taking your morning walk. You were resting. You must not walk until you are tired. I am glad I saw you in time to stop. I am on my way to visit a poor girl, about your own age, who has become an orphan. You must come with me and comfort her in her great sorrow."

Flora could not speak. Franklin would wait for her. What would he think? It would be the last time she could see him. He was going away. Her mother had said she would never see him again. She could not bear that. She must



see him and learn where he was going. He would write to her and she would write to him. Then a comforting thought came to her. He would think her mother would not allow her to go out. He would know it was not her fault, and he would find some way of meeting her again. The color came back to her cheeks, and the heart-beats that had been so quickened became normal again.

"You will go?" Framed as a question, it was spoken in a tone of command.

"Why, certainly, I will go, father. I was thinking how sadly I should feel, if my mother were dead."

"You would have a father, and this poor girl has not a living relative in this country. Her mother came from England. Her father joined our Church, not from love of God, but to further his earthly interests. He was not a Mormon at heart. He would never take but one wife."

He gave the word to drive on, and they went South far beyond the city limits. At length they drew up before a weather-beaten cottage. Not a house in sight — the only view a drear expanse of grass-land. They entered the house; the dilapidated condition of the outside was in keeping with the abject poverty of the interior. Flora's sympathies were excited. Her mother's



house was not so fine as the one in which she had passed her younger days, but it was a palace compared with this hovel. How happy the orphan girl would be to leave this place and live with them.

A young girl came into the room.

"Flora, this is Hilda Bond," said her father.

For a moment Flora did not speak. This orphan girl, so poor in her surroundings, yet had a surname, while she had none — she was only "Flora."

By her caresses and her cheering words she made up for her apparent cold demeanor. Then she looked at the girl. She was tall and straight. Her every movement showed strength and suppleness. She had dark hair and eyes and a skin which, naturally olive in tint, had been so browned by exposure that it needed but a gaudy Roman scarf to make her a daughter of sunny Italy.

And Hilda looked at the vision of blue, and red, and gold before her. She had loved her father and mother — only them. Was there a place in her heart for this doll? — for to Hilda's strong nature Flora seemed like one.

Jason Orme spoke to Hilda. "You are to live with Flora and her mother. I will see you again in a few days when I have made arrange-



ments. Come, Flora, I have an appointment with the President."

Flora kissed Hilda, who submitted, passively, to the caress. She had not spoken a word during the visit.

"Mother and I will try to make you happy," were Flora's parting words.

Then Hilda spoke. "There has been little happiness in my life."

When they reached the place where Flora had rested against the orchard fence, the carriage came to a stop and her father made a sign for her to alight. She walked slowly home. She forgot Hilda, her sorrow, and her poverty. Her thoughts were only of Franklin. Should she see him again — and when and where?



## CHAPTER IV

### A VISIT IN THE NIGHT

FLORA told her mother of her meeting with her father and their visit to Hilda. She dwelt upon the girl's beauty, the shabby-looking house, the poverty-stricken interior, and the dreary surroundings. The mother was glad that her daughter was to have a companion of her own sex and faith; it would help her to forget her sinful love for an unbeliever, the son of an avowed enemy.

"Did your father ask after me?"

A life of secrecy leads to dissimulation. Flora was honest, but she did not wish to hurt her mother's feelings. She knew her father had said nothing about her mother, so she replied,

"I told him you were well."

The mother sighed. A child who could deceive her as Flora had done in regard to her relations with Franklin Briant would not hesitate to do so in such a minor matter.

The night was dark and a heavy rain was fall-



ing. A man wearing an overcoat that reached nearly to his feet, and with an umbrella drawn closely down over his head, turned into the Sixth North street and stopped at the last house on the right. It was eleven o'clock. No lights were burning in the house. The man rapped upon the door. Sister Florence was awake. She opened the window.

"Who is there?"

"Jason."

She dressed quickly and opened the door to admit her husband, whom she had not seen for three months, and then only in the presence of others.

"Did Flora tell you of our visit to the orphan girl?"

"Yes, and she spoke of her miserable home and its surroundings."

"Her father's fault. He might have had preferment in the Church, but he was obstinate and refused to take another wife. His life was a failure, for God does not prosper those who reject his teachings."

Sister Florence knew the inner meaning of those last words. Hilda's father had been ostracized, his business taken away from him, but his spirit would not break. He had died, as his wife



had, true to the faith as they saw it, not as others wished to force them to see it. They had the spirit that makes martyrs — and always will.

“If you will go with Flora to where I met her this morning, I will come with the carriage and take you to see Hilda. I will not force her company upon you, unless you are willing to have her live with you.”

“Flora likes her and that is sufficient,” said his wife.

“I prefer to have you see her,” was the reply, “and shall expect you to meet me to-morrow morning, if it is pleasant. If it rains, I will come to the house for you.”

“Are you going out again to-night?” asked his wife. “It is very late, and the storm is a severe one.”

“I must go. Maria’s baby is sick and I must help her care for it.”

Sister Florence said no more. Maria was the plural wife who had taken her place — had driven her and her child from her home.

Women go into the divorce courts because their husbands have been seen in the company of other women, or love-letters have been found in their husband’s pockets. Their feelings are outraged, the marriage vows have been broken, and they



demand their freedom. But how slight are their injuries compared with those of a Mormon wife who is driven from her home, knows that another woman has taken her place, yet is bound "for time and all eternity" to the man by ties that no human court can sever.

Great must be the religious faith that can sustain them under such a trial. Yet, perhaps, by education and environment the natural inclination to personal possession is so perverted that what seems a moral wrong to others appears natural and proper to them. But, as in the greatest criminal a spark of divinity is left, so in the hearts of many Mormon wives there must be an objection to the divided affection of a husband and their isolation to make room for a plural wife, probably younger and fairer, while they who have borne him children have faded with these flowerings of their love.

Jason Orme, in his long overcoat, with the umbrella covering his face, made his way to the other home, where lived his wife Maria and her sick child. Sister Florence went back to her lonely bed and her pillow was wet with her tears, even as the slave mother wept when her child was torn from her arms and sold to another master.

The storm had not abated the next morning, and



Jason Orme came to the last house on the right in his closed carriage. Hilda greeted Flora and her mother pleasantly, but not effusively. There was a reserve, a dignity, about her, which suited those dark eyes and that firm mouth and repelled familiarity in others.

Jason Orme said he must go back to the city.

"I will leave you here to get acquainted. I will come for you as soon as my duties will permit."

Neither Flora nor her mother cared to examine the house. Why should they, when Hilda was to go and live with them? The afternoon wore away and the evening came. The rain had ceased, but the sky was still clouded. Hilda was a good cook, and the luncheon and the supper were appetizing.

It was nine o'clock.

"Shall we have to stay here all night?" Flora asked her mother.

"He must have been very busy," was the reply. "He will come for us to-morrow."

The next morning a wagon was driven to the door. In it were beds and bedding, household goods, food, and every article of a personal nature belonging to Flora or her mother. As they were being unloaded, Flora's heart sank. This



was to be her home! Her mother said nothing. She had been exiled before and had lived. This was but a repetition of a former experience, but her heart bled for her daughter.

But she could not help thinking, "Why was it done?" Was her husband going to take another wife? He was nearly eighty years old, but men even older had taken plural wives. Then she thought of Franklin Briant. Perhaps his father had written to or seen her husband, and the change had been made to remove Flora beyond her lover's reach. She had told her daughter that Franklin was going away, but that remark had been the invention of the moment,—a reason for his saying good-by,—but she had no knowledge that he was not to remain at home.

Yes, this new isolation was on her daughter's account, but she must not know that. Perhaps their stay would be only temporary, and they would soon return to their old home.

Hilda said nothing to indicate surprise.

"It will be quite homelike when we get things put in place," she said to Flora, "and when the grass is green and the peach trees in the garden are budded it is very pleasant here. The house needs paint and repairs, but father was too poor



to fix the place up. No doubt the new owner will do it — he rides in his carriage.”

Flora started. Did not this orphan know that the new owner was her father, that her mother was his wife? Well, let it be so. She would not explain, but Hilda’s pleasant words called for some recognition.

“We must all do our best to make things look pretty and be happy.”

But as she spoke she thought of Franklin. Never could she be happy? He would not know where she was. Then the thought came to her that perhaps her meetings with Franklin had been noticed, and her father had been told. Yes, that was it, and her mother was made to suffer on her account. She must love and comfort her, and care for her more than ever. So mother and daughter each carried the same secret in her heart, but neither dared to confide in the other.



## CHAPTER V

### THE MANIFESTO

FOR several years previous to the opening of this story the Mormons in Utah had undergone great trials and suffering, in many cases not undeserved. A drastic law against polygamy had been passed by the National Congress and, in accordance with its provisions, the leading polygamists were arrested and fined or thrown into prison. Mormon families were broken up and fathers, wives, and children sought safety in flight. Before the Civil War the slaves sought freedom in the North by what was called "the underground." During the "raid" against the Mormons that word came again into use, but there was no friendly North to which they could fly. The Church property was seized by United States marshals, and the Mormon men and women were disfranchised.

But there was a Moses to lead them back to peace and prosperity in their own land. He was a young man, a Mormon, not a polygamist, whose father was a high authority in the Church. He



had been to Washington and secured the return of the Church property. He had just arrived from another visit to the Capital on the day that Jason Orme took his wife and daughter to Hilda Bond's house. A council had been called by the President to hear his report and the young man's father formed one of the council.

The young man said that the Government would relax its severity upon one condition only,—the practice of polygamy and other illegal domestic relations must be stopped.

"But," said the President, "we practice the system of plural marriage in accordance with a Revelation from God. How can man set aside the commands of the Almighty?"

That remark seemed to settle the question without further consideration. No member of that Council would set himself up against the word of God, not if his life depended upon it.

No one spoke, but all looked at the young man to see what answer he could give to such an unanswerable proposition. He looked about the room and saw a kindly, inquiring glance in his father's eye.

The young man drew himself up to his full stature and spoke with clear, ringing tones.

"If polygamy is practiced in accordance with



a Revelation from God, the only way in which it can be stopped is by a Revelation, from the same High Power, prohibiting it in the future."

A murmur of astonishment and dissent came from the members of the Council. There was silence for a time, then an aged apostle said:

"If such a Revelation should come, and plural marriage be forbidden by God in the future, would the Government at Washington oblige us, who have plural wives, to separate from them entirely?"

The young man replied, "The Government demands that and will be satisfied with nothing less."

One of the Council said, "What God has joined together let no man put asunder," and many bowed their heads or spoke in assent.

The President said he would await a Revelation from Above. If one came, they would be called together again to hear it. A few days after the Council dissolved the President sent for the young man.

"I have prayed to the Lord for guidance and a means of deliverance from the burdens placed upon us by evil men. He counsels us to 'be obedient to the powers that are.' I have put His Revelation into this form," and he read:



"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has not been solemnizing plural marriages of late, and, by a Revelation from God, the faithful are advised to refrain from contracting any marriages forbidden by the law of the land."

The young man asked,

"Does that mean the giving up of polygamy entirely?"

The President replied:

"Why, of course it does. Isn't that what the Government wants us to do?"

"Not only that," said the young man, "it demands that illicit domestic relations shall also cease."

There was a shrewd look in the President's face as he asked,

"Have they been stopped in other parts of the country?"

"We are in a different position," was the reply. "The other States regulate such matters in their own way. Utah is a territory and governed by the laws of the United States."

"Utah ought to be a sovereign State," said the President reflectively.

"It can be," the young man replied, "as soon as it conforms to existing laws."

"I will call the Council together and tell them



what God has revealed to me," said the President.

This was done. The Revelation was accepted by the Council as the Word of God. The Revelation was sent to the different "Stakes of Zion," which gave their adherence. When all was finished, word was flashed around the world and into every city, town, village, and hamlet in Mormon-dom that there were to be no more plural marriages. Abraham Lincoln, with his Proclamation of Emancipation, had removed the shackles from millions of slaves. God, by His Revelation, had freed the Mormon women from their bondage, and had turned the Mormon HOUSE into a HOME!



## CHAPTER VI

### MORMON HOUSEHOLDS

SEVERAL weeks passed before Hilda's reserve was broken through. She was pleasant to Flora, but not companionable. Mrs. Orme No. 4, or, as she was always called, "Sister Florence," took upon herself all the housekeeping duties and cares. Flora said nothing, because she knew her mother was happier when busy. It was Hilda who remonstrated.

"Here are we, two young, healthy girls, and we sit around and allow your mother to do all the work. It isn't right, and I can't stand it any longer."

Then she said decidedly,

"Sister Florence, Flora and I have combined against you."

The mother looked up, surprised at this declaration.

Hilda went on:

"You may do the cooking, because I like nice things to eat, but don't know how to make them as good as you do. But we two are going to



wash the dishes, and sweep and dust, and do everything else. And when your work is done you are to sit down and be the lady."

The mother objected, but was laughingly overruled. Time hung heavy on her hands and she begged to be allowed to do more. Flora would have yielded, for it would be better for her to work than to sit with hands folded and think of her unhappy past, and the future that promised no relief. But Hilda solved the question.

"Before my father joined the Church he had many books. They are locked up in the room up-stairs. I will get them. You can read them when you are at leisure, and in the evenings you can read to us the good things you have found during the day."

The books were brought down and hidden in a closet, for the block teachers might come any day and catechise them as to their firmness in the faith. From early youth Mormon children are taken in charge by their spiritual teachers and advisers, and that supervision is never relaxed. The child of six and the man of eighty must prove their soundness in the creed by words and works.

Among the books was a large family Bible and the mother read it incessantly.



One evening Hilda said:

"You have been reading that book for several days. Have you found anything to interest us?"

"I have found much, but little that is comforting to one in our position. I find in Exodus five beautiful words,— 'The wife of thy bosom.' "

Her voice broke and she was silent for a moment — then she added:

"But in another place it said, 'No man knew who was his father.' "

"There are a good many children in Utah who are as badly off as that man," said Hilda.

"Does it say anything about plural marriage?" asked Flora.

Her mother replied: "There is much in this book to sustain the practice of polygamy. Here is one passage in Isaiah, 'In that day seven women shall take hold of one man.' "

"Why," exclaimed Hilda, "that is worse than the Mahometans. They are allowed only four wives, and those only if the man is rich; poor men can have only one wife. I hope my husband will be poor."

"And so do I," Flora whispered.

"I find in what is called the New Testament, in Matthew, what seems to be a new dispensation.



I will read it to you," and she opened the book where she had put a piece of paper to mark the place.

" 'And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

" 'And said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?

" 'Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.' "

" That last part is just what the block teachers tell us," said Hilda.

The mother added: " But farther on it says no man shall put away his wife unless she is unfaithful."

" That's what my father believed," said Hilda. " He wouldn't have but one wife. He was offered preferment in the Church if he would take another, but he refused and from that day his ill luck began. No, it wasn't luck. He was proscribed and persecuted. I believe as my father did. My husband will have only one wife and that will be I. If he takes another, I will leave him."

" And so would I," cried Flora.



"But where would you go?" asked the mother.

"I don't know, I shouldn't care. Perhaps, if they hunted for me, they might find me in the river Jordan."

Sister Florence held up her hands in protestation.

"We have talked too much, children. This book says we must be content with the situation in which we are placed."

The two girls occupied a double-bedded room. When they were alone for the night Flora asked, "Where did you learn about those Mahom — what did you call them?"

"Mahometans. In those big books in the closet — they are called encyclopedias. They are just wonderful — they tell you everything. The old Jews were just like Mormons. They had lots of wives; but about an hundred years after Christ was born they had only one wife, but the Talmud, that's their Bible, doesn't say they can't have more, and, isn't it funny, the missionaries who go to the countries where men have more than one wife just try to convert them, but don't ask them to give up their wives?"

"But the United States Government wants



Mormons to give up their plural wives and have only one."

"I'm glad of it," said Hilda.

"And so am I," was Flora's reply.

The ice of reserve was broken: the two girls had a common belief, a common wish, a common hope,—to be a man's only wife, and the maker of his home.

Let us visit another Mormon household. The apostle, Jason Orme, had four wives, and they lived in four different houses. One house had sufficed until the United States Government took repressive measures; then it became necessary to hide the plural wives, and to visit them only by stealth.

When Kimball and Hyde returned from England with the young English girl converts Jason took Jane Mallow as his first wife, and she had borne ten of the children of which he was the father. As he rose higher in the Church, to demonstrate his belief in the doctrine of plural marriage, he was "sealed" to Mary Goodwillie in the Endowment House. A friend's wife had died and left three daughters of marriageable age. They had been divided among the faithful, like



any other property, and Florence Ledyard had fallen to him.

There was no profession of love on either side. The man wished the approval of the Church and the young woman must have a home. There was no way in which she could earn her living. She had never been taught how to earn money, and, if she had been, there was nothing for her to do. Her heart yearned for some one to love and to love her, and she became a mother. After she was put away in the house in Sixth North street she had had few visits from her husband. Since that time he had taken a fourth wife, Maria Payne, and had been made one of the Twelve Apostles.

Why she had been taken to Hilda's house she could not fully divine. She knew that her husband had some motive other than she had imagined. What it was time would disclose. She had her child. If she were not taken from her, she would not complain. But Flora's beauty made her apprehensive. She would be seen and coveted. She was safer where they now lived than in the city. Thus the mother's heart was solaced with a false hope.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

SISTER FLORENCE knew why she had been obliged to leave the great house where she had lived with the other wives, Jane and Mary; but she could not understand why she had been taken from the house in Sixth North street to one which lacked so many of its comforts. We shall have to go back to a time several days previous to that change, in order to learn the impelling reason.

The President was aged and infirm, and the First Councilor was in his office attending to urgent business. He was a man of large stature, heavily built, with dark hair, sharp black eyes, a firmly set chin, and a face that bespoke aggressiveness in every look. Seated at the table with him was an apostle well-known to us — Jason Orme.

“ You knew our late brother William Bond? ” Jason asked.

The First Councilor closed his mouth with an audible snap.



"Yes, I knew him. He was an obstinate man. He refused to take a plural wife when the Church commanded, but God visited his wrath upon him. He was rich and could have supported many wives."

"God deprived him of his riches," said Jason.

"Do you know how?" asked the Councilor.

"I never heard anything but the fact."

"I will tell you. When he lay ill and was unable to attend to his mining business, which paid him great profits, but of which he failed to pay full tithes to the Church as God commands, his foreman came to him for instructions, which the sick man was unable to give to him. So Brother Harvey — it was he — came to me. He said he had discovered the mine, but that Bond had supplied the money to work it and had taken the lion's share of the profits. I advised him to bring his claim before the Council, which he did. He brought witnesses from the mine, and, considering all things, we decided that Brother Harvey was the rightful owner, and the Church has profited much by the change."

"Bond left a wife and one daughter," said Jason. "The widow is dead, but the daughter is living with Sister Florence and her daughter."

"In Sixth North street?" asked the Councilor.



"No, they are in Bond's old home on the South Road, where he lived in the summer."

"But why did you move your wife and daughter so far from the Tabernacle and the Temple?"

"I had a reason which I came this morning to explain to you. I have one unmarried son, Samson, about twenty-one years old."

"Why has he not married before? Is he in good health?"

"The best, from infancy. He is faithful to the Church in all ways but one. He has always been opposed to plural marriage. Since the Manifesto he has expressed his intention of marrying and I have chosen a wife for him."

"Bond's daughter, I suppose."

"Yes, God has blessed her with physical charms that will appeal to my son."

The Councilor smiled cynically.

"An appropriate marriage. They will both defy the teachings of the Church as regards plural marriage."

"But the Revelation has removed the necessity."

"But not the custom," the Councilor interpolated.

"Then the practice will be continued — secretly, of course."



"Certainly; unless we do, we shall soon fall into that state of gross licentiousness which afflicts the world, and which plural marriage prevents. We are a moral people, and by following God's command we can keep so."

"Samson believes in the Manifesto."

"Bah! a sop to fool the Gentiles. The President when he wrote it said God *commanded*. I cut out that word and substituted *advised*. Commands must be obeyed, but advice is not always followed. But you said you had a reason for moving your wife to Bond's house."

"Yes; when Samson is married he can live in Sixth North street, and it is much safer for me to visit my wife where she is now than it was in the city. Jane is failing fast; Mary is living now in Ogden; Maria has two babies to care for, and Mary is not a good cook."

"Then you intend to have Sister Florence take Jane's place."

"When the Lord wills."

"We must all bow to his decrees," said the Councilor. "It seems to be His will that our beloved President should soon be taken to his bosom to live in eternal glory with his wives who will become, for all time, the daughters of Heaven. It is not improbable that I shall be



called up to take his place, unworthy as I am."

"None more worthy," said Jason fervently.

"I know I shall have your support, Brother Orme. My elevation will make room for another Councilor. I wish your presence as one of them."

Jason's heart bounded. That would be the summit of his ambition. He was too old to expect that he would ever be the head of the Church.

"I wish," said the Councilor, "that we were bound together by a closer tie than now. If you had an unmarried daughter."

"I have one, Florence's daughter, but she is not yet seventeen."

"No doubt she is fair like her mother."

"You shall see her. What beauty she has shall speak for itself."

A messenger rushed into the room.

"The President is stricken and the doctor says he is dying. You must come at once."

That evening when the descending sun turned to gold the clouds that formed an archway in the Heavens, the soul of the First President passed through the portal to meet the wives who had preceded him and await the coming of those left sorrowing on earth. This thought was expressed by the First Councilor to the Apostle



Jason, who bowed his assent. But it was only natural, only human, that each was thinking, more particularly of the elevation in power that was to come to him personally. God's vicegerent on earth was dead. Long live his successor and his councilors!



## CHAPTER VIII

### BROTHER SAMSON

SAMSON ORME, as his father had told the First Councilor, was about twenty-one years old; in fact, he had passed some four months beyond that, in the minds of youth, mature age. He was born a merchant. At the age of eighteen, with capital supplied by his father, he had opened a small notion store for the sale of pins, needles, spool silk and cotton, and other domestic requirements. The volume of trade had forced him to take larger quarters in which he had found room for cloths of cotton, wool, and silk, and for hosiery,—in fact, a well-stocked dry-goods store.

He was a stout, round-faced, smooth-shaven, light-haired, red-cheeked young man, popular with Gentiles as well as with Mormons. His often repeated declaration that he proposed to have but one wife at a time when he married had increased his patronage from the Gentiles. When told by his young Mormon friends that he would yet come to it, he replied:



"Then I won't marry at all. If I don't have one wife they can't make me have two."

Many of the Mormons predicted that he would become an apostate and join the Gentiles; but he lived with his father, who was a power in the Church and, thus far, no one had accused him of heresy.

One morning he had a visit from his father, which was an event that seldom occurred.

"Samson, I wish to make Sister Florence a present of a dress. What color would you suggest?"

"She usually dresses in black."

"Not black," said his father, decidedly.

"Here is a pearl gray," said Samson, opening the piece of goods.

"That will do, and now what color will suit Flora best?"

"Blue, by all means," said Samson. Flora was his favorite sister. They had been playmates in childhood, and he had always wished that Flora's mother was his own, she was so pretty and so sweet-voiced. His own mother, aged with a life of toil and the rearing of ten children, was often querulous and sometimes harsh in voice and severe in discipline.



His father made no objection to the choice of blue for his daughter.

"There is another young lady living with them," said his father, "—that orphan girl, Hilda Bond; she must not be forgotten. She is dark; blue would not become her."

"Pink or red," said Samson, unfolding some more dress goods.

"I think she would prefer that dark red," said his father. "She is very handsome, dignified and modest in her manner, but queenly in appearance. You must add such articles as will be needed to complete the dresses."

"I will send them the three pieces of goods and they can cut off what they need."

"No, you must take them yourself, Samson. If they need a dressmaker supply one."

"Sister Florence always made her own dresses," suggested Samson.

"Very well; but perhaps she will not care to make three."

He gave his son directions how to reach the house on the South Road, and said that he would pay the bill when it was ready. As he reached the store door, he added, "You may take my carriage when it is not in use."

The women were astonished when Samson ar-



rived with several large packages. Flora and her mother were delighted to see him, and he was introduced to Hilda.

Cries of pleasure were uttered when the packages were opened. The goods were unrolled and held up, to view the effect and contrast. While this was being done, Samson watched Hilda. He said to himself that he could love that woman, and his next thought was that he would try to win her.

When everything had been examined and praised, he asked,

"Shall I send a dressmaker?"

"Oh, no," said Sister Florence, "I know how to cut and fit them, and it will be a pleasure to make them, only it will take a long time without a sewing-machine."

"I forgot to tell you," said Samson, "that these dresses are a present from father."

Sister Florence had read so much that she had become tired, and the change to dressmaking was not work, but a recreation.

The second day thereafter a wagon was driven to the door and a sewing-machine was brought in. With it was a note from Samson saying that he had bought a new machine and hoped that the ladies would accept it, with his compliments. He



added that he was coming out to see the dresses when they were finished. He kept his word, and brought a bouquet for each of the ladies. Mormon men can love and be as gallant as other lovers. No form of religion, nor lack of it, has ever quenched that divine fire that draws man to woman and woman to man.

Samson was soon on good terms with Hilda. He had said that he was opposed to plural marriage. Then he told her about his business affairs. His patrons were chiefly women, but many men visited his store and he had made money as agent for a New York life insurance company. Having some spare money he had found a partner and had gone into the salt business. He would end by saying, "I'm going to get married some day." They took long walks together, and, although they were Mormons, their conversation was very like that of all youths and maids under similar circumstances.

Samson noticed that the exterior of the house was bare and uninviting. He brought out vines to clamber over the front piazza, sweet peas and rose-bushes for the garden, and, because it was greatly needed, a rustic seat, which was placed under the peach trees, which were soon in full bloom.



Sister Florence, Flora, and Hilda were happy in what was the nearest approach to a real home that they had ever seen. Florence's life had been made unhappy by her isolation; Flora's by her mother's sorrow, and Hilda's by the poverty, sickness, and death of her parents. For once they were content with the situation in which they were placed.

When the dresses were done the ladies had stood in line, side by side, for Samson's inspection. The two girls were slighter in figure than the mother, but they were very nearly of the same height. There they stood,—three roses,—two just budding, the other full-bloom, its heart having felt the sting of its own thorns.



## CHAPTER IX

### AWAY FROM HOME

FRANKLIN BRIANT went to the rendezvous that he had appointed for his meeting with Flora. He waited long after the hour mentioned in the slip of paper that he had put into her hand, but she did not come. Then his mind was filled with perplexities. Was she ill? She was in good health the day before. Had her mother kept her in the house so that she could not meet him? That was possible, even probable, for he knew that Sister Florence was a Mormon and would never consent to have her daughter marry a Gentile. Marry Flora? Even if possible, that happy event was too far in the future to merit present consideration. He was entirely dependent upon his father, who would either laugh or be angry at the idea of his son's marrying a Mormon girl, however beautiful she might be.

But love does not always end in marriage. Then he reasoned with himself. Perhaps it was not love that he felt for Flora; it might be only



friendship: but, whatever it was, he knew that they could be happy together, were they not separated by different religious faiths.

Then his hopefulness fled, his courage fell; perhaps she had remained away of her own free will. He had read that women were fickle. Again, she loved her mother and would take her counsel to heart. But words and looks had passed between them that again removed his doubts. He would trust her, and come to the trysting place each day. This he did, but his eyes were not gladdened by her approach.

He went one evening to the house in Sixth North street. There was no light within. It was only seven o'clock, and they could not have retired so early. He raised the knocker, but did not let it fall. He tried to recall what her mother had said. As he remembered her words, she had said that *he* was going away. Perhaps she did say that *she*, Flora, was going away. He asked Samson Orme if his sister Flora had gone away. His answer had been:

"I don't know. I haven't seen nor heard from Flora or her mother for a long time."

He would have continued his search, but was prevented by an unexpected, though not unpleasant, interview with his father.



"Frank, I have come to the conclusion that you don't like being a printer and that you have no ambition to succeed me as editor of the *Star*."

"I don't like to disappoint you, father, but you have said it about as I feel."

"What would you choose for your life's work?"

"Well, father, I've always thought I'd like to be a lawyer."

"You'd have to leave home and go to college."

"Couldn't I study here with some lawyer?"

"No. I was born in the East and have eastern ideas. That's why I oppose certain Mormon practices. You are young and your mind is uninformed. If you remain here the influences are insidious. Under certain circumstances you might be induced to become a Mormon."

"I think you do me an injustice by thinking that possible."

"Perhaps so, but we will say no more about it. I want you to see the world, mix with its people, and have your mind strengthened in a different atmosphere. I have talked it over with your mother, and we have decided to send you east to enter some college."

"I should like to go to Harvard or Yale."



"I am advised to have you enter Boston University, which is in the city of that name. It has a fine law school, and my desire is to have you become a great lawyer rather than a crack pitcher, half-back, or bow oar."

Preparations for the departure were quickly made. When all was ready the father had another confidential talk with his son.

"You are to go first to Winsted, Connecticut, and visit your Aunt Priscilla and your Uncle John. Your examinations will not come for several weeks, and you will enjoy visiting the old homestead where I was born, if it is still standing. Aunt Priscilla will show you around. My four brothers,—Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Monroe,—have gone out into the world to make their fortunes as I did. I set them an example—perhaps it was a bad one. Jefferson and Monroe are pork packers in Chicago. You must look them up."

"I shall be happy to meet my aunt and my uncles."

"Now, Frank, I am going to keep your location a secret. I have reasons which I consider good ones. As soon as you reach Boston hire a post-office box and send me the number. Address all your letters to the *Star* and put my initials in



the corner. And, Frank, if you wish to write to anybody here, send the letter, under cover, to me, and I will see that it is delivered."

Franklin mentally resolved that the first letter to be sent so would be to Miss Flora Orme.

The parting with his mother was a sad one. She had grown weaker and her tears fell freely as she embraced him.

"I fear this is the last time I shall see you, Frank. Be a good boy. If you are as good a man as your dear father, I shall be satisfied. Give my best love to my sister and my brother and tell them I long to see them once more before I go."

Her son tried to cheer her, but his own eyes were full, and a big lump in his throat choked his utterance.

When Frank reached Chicago he was stunned, almost stupefied, by the rush and riot of the great city. He found his uncles, who were ceremoniously kind to him and deputed a clerk to show him the sights. His stay in New York was short — another wilderness of brick and stone, another great caravansary where human ants toiled and pleased, starved and feasted, and died almost as fast as new souls from the Great Beyond were incarnated in the flesh.



What a pleasure, what a relief, it was to reach the quiet town in northwestern Connecticut and rest in an old-fashioned rocking-chair in his Aunt Priscilla's cozy sitting-room, with preserved flowers in frames upon the wall, wax canaries perched upon twigs on the mantel-piece, a live one singing in the sunlight, the tabby-cat asleep on the rag mat of many colors, and the big clock in the entry, saying, "peace," "rest"—"peace," "rest," sixty times every hour.

Aunt Priscilla, several years older than his mother, was rugged, prim, opinionated, these qualities softened by a pleasant voice and kindly smile; but she held in reserve a sharp tongue and a lowering brow for use when occasion required, which was when her niece Susan, usually called Sukey, did something *odys*, or failed to do something ordered or requested, which, in Aunt Priscilla's opinion was equally *odys*.

Uncle John had not prospered in a worldly way, but had added so largely to his family that it was found necessary for his sister to become responsible for the care and support of one of the numerous brood, which accounts for Sukey's presence in her aunt's family.

While at Winsted, Franklin wrote to his father and mother and sister, and enclosed a letter to



Flora, in which he forgave her in advance for her failure to meet him, and asked her to write to him. He did not mail the letter until he reached Boston and purchased the box in the postoffice. He put his address in both letters and sent them on their way, hoping they would bring him loving words from home — and Flora.

He passed his examinations and was admitted to Boston University. He had rooms in Mount Vernon street,— a study, sleeping room, and bath, with meals in the house, if desired. As a relaxation from study he attended theaters, concerts, and the opera; and on Sundays, and some evenings, was a regular attendant at services in a church not far from his residence.

The knowledge that he came from Utah caused much speculation among his fellow and girl students, and many out-spoken questions.

“Were you born in Utah, Mr. Briant?” asked Miss Caroline Beebe, who intended to become a lawyer.

Evading a direct reply, Franklin said,

“Ever since I can remember I have lived in Salt Lake City.”

“Aren’t you glad to get away from such people?”



"My father, mother, and sister live there," was his reply.

He did not say that it was the home of the girl he loved.

"Those Mormons must be horrid people," and Miss Beebe accentuated her opinion by a contemptuous smile.

"They are honest and hard-working. As the poet says they have 'made the desert blossom as the rose.' "

"But their marriage customs are so absurd—positively disgusting," and there was an upward tilt of the nose and a pursing of her mouth.

"It is their religion," was his reply.

"They are no better than heathens," exclaimed Miss Beebe, "and the women must feel their degradation."

"Some do, but the majority do not," said Franklin. "Women are more religious than men and what their creed demands they accept and obey."

Miss Beebe was not convinced.

"Their faces must show the miserable lives they lead."

"There you are decidedly wrong," cried Franklin, as a vision of Flora came before him. "Their women are handsome, the young girls as



beautiful, as any I have seen here in Boston."

There was another disdainful tilt of the nose. His remark was not complimentary. One of those things, as *Punch* says, that had been better left unsaid.

Two months had passed since he began his studies. He had heard from his father several times. His mother's health was no better. His father did not mention Flora, and she had not answered the letter enclosed in the one written to his father at Winsted. He tried to explain her silence in a way to excuse her, but could not. Even if she had changed her mind and loved him no longer, she could write and tell him so. That blow, severe as it would be, could cause him no more heartaches than this suspense.

His reflections, ever present when not engaged in study, and often taking time that should have been given to it, were interrupted by the receipt of a telegram containing sad news:

"Mother has passed away,  
Interment at Winsted,  
Meet me there Tuesday."

Melissa Somerby Briant was buried in the cemetery beside her father and mother. John came to the funeral with his wife and nine chil-



dren. To Sukey this reunion with her brothers and sisters was a holiday, and Aunt Priscilla's brow grew dark with displeasure and her voice sharp with repeated admonitions to silence, and to stop acting so *odys*.

Franklin was obliged to return to his studies, but his father remained to talk over family matters with his sister-in-law. The conclusion arrived at was that John should have the house, which was much larger than the one he rented, thus helping him in a money way. Priscilla was to go back to Utah with Mr. Briant to take charge of his house, as Gertrude was not yet capable of managing it.

"Sukey must go with me," said Priscilla. "When she's with the other children they are always squabbling and John's wife has no more management in her than a ten-year-old. They are all going to destruction, but it can't be helped. I've had Sukey a year and she's a little less *odys*, but you saw how she acted when she got with the others. Lord knows what she'll do when she gets to your place."

"The Mormon children are like any others," said Mr. Briant.

"But she ain't," said Priscilla grimly. "That's the trouble. But if you want me, you



must take her, and run the risk; and you mustn't blame me for what happens."

Franklin had read that Boston girls, especially the educated ones, were prim in their manners, had corkscrew curls, and wore spectacles. He had not found it so. Those he had met had fresh, young faces, hair done up in the latest style, and they looked out of bright eyes which had no window-panes before them. But he had seen no one with such beautiful hair, such lovely eyes, and such a pure, sweet face as Flora's — and his reflections and attendant heartaches began all over again.



## CHAPTER X

### A REAL MARRIAGE

JASON ORME expressed no surprise when his son Samson asked permission to marry. He gave his consent without asking the name of the intended bride. He had kept well informed and knew that his plan, or rather plot, had been successful. It had cost him the price of three dresses, two of which it was his duty to supply.

The President was pleased when Jason told him of the coming marriage, and offered to perform the ceremony. Hilda was inclined to rebel, but Sister Florence told her that the President's favor would help her future husband and she acquiesced, with a mental protest.

The marriage took place at the old house on the South Road. Samson's father wished it to occur at his house, but Hilda refused to go there.

"This house was my father's. In it my mother and he suffered the miseries of poverty and the pangs of disease, and it shall witness the beginning of my happiness — the first I have known."

The President came and Hilda Bond became



Mrs. Samson Orme. Hers was no divided title. There was no plural wife to shame her husband's love, to take him from the *home* that she was resolved to make for him.

For the first time the President met Flora Orme. She was happy for her best loved brother had married her dearest girl friend and confidante. Hilda was to begin a life such as she craved for herself,—one man and one woman, they to become one flesh.

No one knew what was passing in the mind of the President as he gazed upon Flora's smiling face and symmetrical form. Perhaps there came a wish to make her his fifth wife—he already had four wives and twelve children, and he was a young man,—only fifty-two.

Hilda bore herself defiantly. She had won a victory: her husband was not a polygamist. The President noticed her proud air and accepted the challenge.

"I congratulate you, Sister Hilda," he said softly.

"I am not Sister Hilda. I am Mrs. Samson Orme," was her quick reply.

"He has been slow to marry."

"He marries for love as I have done. He thinks as I do."



"And what do you think?" the President asked blandly.

"That a man should have but one wife and cling to her until death parts them," and her face flushed with the vehemence of her feelings.

"Then you nor he believe in celestial marriage?" This was both an assertion and a question.

Hilda knew that this was a critical moment, but she was steadfast.

"Why should we? The son of the first prophet has repudiated the doctrine, and God has given a Revelation forbidding it. Why should we believe in it?"

The President did not answer. Flora came toward them and he welcomed the interruption.

Samson took his bride to the house on Sixth North street that had been formerly occupied by Flora and her mother.

Hilda feared the President. She knew his power and that he would be unscrupulous in using it against her. He looked upon her as an enemy of the Church's foundation principle. A woman is never satisfied with one declaration of her husband's love and loyalty. She must hear it over and over again.

When they were in their own home, Hilda said,



“Samson, you will never forsake me, will you, and take another wife while I live?”

“Nothing could induce me to do that, Hilda.”

“Suppose the Church should try to force you as it did my father? Suppose it reduces you to poverty as it did him? Would you then be true to me?”

“I swear to you, Hilda, that I would give my life rather than break the promise I have made to you,” and Samson meant what he said—then.

“I will believe you, Samson. But the Church is mighty and one man is weak. Remember that a woman was the ruin of the one for whom you are named, and he was a strong man.”

“But he pulled down the temple of his enemies.”

“And so will I pull down the Mormon’s Temple, if they take you from me. My heart is sore and bitter at the treatment my father and mother received from the Church. He was robbed of his fortune. He fell sick; he lacked food and medicines to make him well again. No helping hand was held out to him. He died, and my mother soon followed him—for her heart was broken. I remember these scenes. I said I would never trust a Mormon again. But I have believed you. My heart is full of wounds. If



you open them again, nothing will save me from —”

She stopped short, and Samson's eyes looked a question that she understood.

“I do not know,” she answered the mute inquiry hesitatingly.

“Would you revenge yourself on me?” he asked.

“I am not a murderess. Nor would I take my own life, worthless as it would be. No, but —” She stopped again, and smiled. “We have gone too far, Samson. This is our wedding night. Let us banish thoughts of trouble and vengeance and think only of our love.”

Hilda Orme was a woman of determination and she was resourceful in mind and body. Beware, Samson Orme, if you prove false to her!



## CHAPTER XI

### AUNT PRISCILLA'S OPINIONS

**D**URING the trip from Winsted to Salt Lake City, Miss Priscilla Somerby looked about her with open-eyed wonderment. She had not the stoicism of the American Indian who can look unmoved upon the greatest manifestations of modern progress.

"Beats all," she said, "how folks can make a living packed so close together."

"That's the reason they prosper," said Mr. Briant. "The man who lives away from his fellows gets little to do and nobody to pay him for doing it. Look at the Chinese."

Miss Priscilla gave a portentous sniff.

Mr. Briant was undismayed. "Texas is our largest State, with about three million people. In China there is a province only two-thirds as large in which fifty million make a living."

With an aggravated sniff the lady said, "Them rat eaters can live on anything."

"There you are wrong. They raise beans and rice and wheat. No one is very rich but few



are very poor. And that reminds me to say that no doubt you have formed a very poor opinion of the Mormons. When you see them you may think differently."

"Franklin has told me much about them and I've read some things myself; all I can say is that if they are better than what I've heard and read they certainly ought to be."

A few days after their arrival at Mr. Briant's home he took her for a drive to show her the city.

"What's that building?" she asked, pointing to a great pile with four sky-piercing towers.

"That's the great Mormon Temple. It cost nearly four million dollars to build and furnish it."

"That's a great waste of money — better give it to the poor," was her comment. "What's that statter on top of it?"

"That's the Angel Moroni. The Mormons say he came down from Heaven to show the Prophet Joseph Smith where to find the Book of Mormon."

"Smith!" said Miss Priscilla, with a snort. "That's a fine name for a prophet, isn't it? What did you say the angel's name was — Mahoney?"

Mr. Briant pointed to another large building.



"That's the Tabernacle — it's a church — seats eight thousand people."

"I don't believe in such big churches," said she. "To my mind there's nothing so nice as small churches all over a town or city, on the street corners where everybody can see them and be reminded of God and his mercies to us poor sinners."

They were now in the residential section.

"The President of the Church lives in that big house," said Mr. Briant.

"What's his name?"

"Smith."

"I always knew there was lots of Smiths, but I never knew before that there was enough of 'em to get up a religion for themselves."

She espied a small house covered with vines and bright with roses.

"Who lives there?"

Mr. Briant said mildly:

"You know the Mormons have more than one wife. One of the President's lives there."

"How many has he got?"

"Four now. They say he has bought another house, and that may mean five very soon."

Miss Priscilla tossed her head. "He's



wusser'n a Turk. They are ignorant, but he ought to know better."

That evening after supper Miss Priscilla went to the bookcase and got the big dictionary. She sat down and began studying it intently.

"Trying to find some word to express your opinion of what you saw to-day?"

"Yes, Madison, that's just what I'm doing."

"Have you found it?"

"I've found something. If a man has two wives it's a bigamy. And there I just blundered onto another word that I wanted — if he has three wives, it's a trigamy."

"What would you call it if he had four, Priscilla?"

"Why, I should say it was a double bigamy."

"And five?"

"That would be a bigamy-trigamy."

"And when the President gets six?"

"That will be double trigamy. Oh, the whole business is *odys*, and this city will perish as did Sodom and Gomorrah."

"Then you think we shall have to wait until God himself punishes the wicked?"

"He may raise up some one to do it for him. I remember reading 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' when I was a girl. How I cried over Little Eva's



death, and poor Uncle Tom. What is wanted is somebody to show up these Mormons as she, 'twas a woman wrote it, did the slaveholders. The people must have their eyes opened."

"I have tried to open them in my paper, but it has a small circulation, and it falls on stony ground. There are too many among the Gentiles who think that the best way is to keep still and let the matter alone. As you say, what is needed is a book that will reach all parts of the country — that, a newspaper can never do."

He went to the bookcase and took from it a copy of Mrs. Stowe's book.

"Do you remember St. Clare, Little Eva's father?"

"Yes, but he wasn't a religious man. It took a black slave with a white heart to show him how his own needed God's grace to cleanse it."

"But he was a good man, at heart. Let me read you some things he said. Perhaps you have forgotten them."

Mr. Briant opened the book and, when he had found the place, read, "'They have absolute control. They are irresponsible despots.'" Then he continued: "He was speaking of the slaveholders, but it is equally true of the Mormon



leaders. They govern their followers in 'body, soul, and spirit.' "

"But, Madison, why not pick out one case and get that settled? That may frighten the others."

"Very good, Priscilla. But listen to what St. Clare says on that very point. 'I can't turn knight errant and undertake to redeem every individual wrong.' That's the way I feel about it."

"I am afraid you don't feel very deeply about it, Madison. The walls of Jericho fell down when the horns were blown. I should keep on blowing my horn."

"I will. But you wrong me when you say I do not feel deeply about this matter. I feel as St. Clare did about slavery. Listen to what he said: 'When I have seen such men in actual ownership of helpless children, of young girls and women, I have been ready to curse my country — to curse the human race'."

From the next room came the sweet melody of "Lead, Kindly Light." Gertrude was at the piano.

"That's it, Priscilla. God must lead us in this fight. He must inspire some man or woman to do for the white slaves of Utah what Mrs. Stowe did for the African slaves of the South."



"It is a hard question, Madison. Of course these Mormons think God is on their side."

"Certainly they do. Napoleon Bonaparte said God fought with the strongest battalions. The sentiment of America, when it is fully aroused, will demand the abolition of polygamy, and a quarter of a million must obey a hundred million. Come into the parlor; Gertrude will play and sing for us."



## CHAPTER XII

### SUKEY

**I**T does not take children long to become acquainted and Miss Susan Somerby, of Winsted, Connecticut, soon accustomed herself to her new surroundings. She had few playmates in her old home and had been obliged to help her aunt with her household duties. One strong reason that had led Priscilla virtually to adopt her brother's child had been "to save herself steps." The child loved "to go on errands," and there were many of them.

The name of Susan's mother was also Susan. It had been corrupted into "Sukey" when she was a child, and it was natural that her child should be called as she had been, uneuphonious and discordant to educated ears as the name was. To be called "Susan" was a warning of a coming reproof or punishment, and did not fall pleasantly on the child's ears, while the familiar "Sukey" indicated that no domestic storms were in sight.

In her new home she was free from all tasks,



for Mr. Briant's servants preferred her room to her company. At the time of her arrival the schools were not in session, and she had very nearly absolute freedom, of which she took advantage. The streets were full of children of all ages. She soon had her friends and her enemies. The one she feasted liberally with candy and cakes; the other got ugly looks, sharp words, sundry shakings, and, in one instance, a sound pounding with a piece of lath, which attack provoked a personal remonstrance from the boy's mother.

A long and heated conversation had preceded the beating.

"What's your name?" Sukey had asked the boy.

"Robert."

"What's your other name?"

"I don't know."

"Yes you do, too."

"No, I don't. It's none of your business anyway."

"Don't you be *sassy* to me," cried Sukey.

The boy retorted, "You don't know your own name."

This remark pleased a crowd of children who, with open eyes and ears, were enjoying the



squabble. The primeval inclination to battle is born in the blood, and even education, while it tames, does not entirely remove the savage instinct. "Let us have peace," cry many; "Peace, with honor," is the reply, which often means war, for its honors are great and lasting. History is largely devoted to the doings of warriors and conquerors, and the fighting microbe in the child's system feeds and fattens upon the stories of daring deeds that form so great a part of its reading.

Sukey met the challenge promptly. "My name is Sukey Somerby."

"What's your mother's name?"

"Just like mine."

"Who's that woman that calls you in?" Robert had become the questioner.

"She's my Aunt Priscilla. My mother lives 'way off," and she pointed to all parts of the compass, "and Aunt Priscilla is my mother now. There, I've been polite to you, and you ought to tell me your mother's name."

Robert saw the force of her argument, and answered, "My mother's name is Sister Ruth."

"You're fooling. Your sister can't be your mother."

"Yes, she is, too," and Robert appealed to the



children about him, who sustained him in his statement.

Sukey was not one to take defeat gracefully. Her eyes snapped, her cheeks grew red with passion, and she cried,

“You are a big liar, and you ought to be whipped.”

“You ain’t big enough to do it,” said Robert, and the defiant remark was accompanied by a facial expression that raised Sukey’s Yankee blood to the boiling point. Picking up a piece of lath that lay in the street, she belabored Robert until he broke away and ran crying toward his home, followed by an army of children.

The mother came to Mr. Briant’s house and was met by Miss Priscilla. After listening to the matter, Sukey was asked for her side of the story which was fluently given, ending with,

“He said his sister was his mother, and that was a lie,—a regular whopper.”

“What is your name?” Priscilla asked the woman.

“I am called Sister Ruth.”

Priscilla’s eyebrows were perceptibly raised.

“Of course you are married, as you have a son. What is your husband’s name? Mr. Bri-



ant is Sukey's uncle. He will see your husband and do what is right in the matter."

The woman did not reply.

"I asked you what your husband's name was. Where does he live?"

The woman did not answer. Priscilla understood. Sister Ruth was one of those make-believe wives. She was to be pitied, and the boy more than she. She must settle the matter herself.

"Susan," and Sukey knew the decision was against her, "the boy was right and you were wrong. You've had a different bringing up, and thought every boy had a father and a mother. You ask the boy's pardon, and if I catch you fighting again, I'll give you a trouncing that you won't forget as long as you live."

Sister Ruth was satisfied with her escape from further disagreeable questions and took her departure. Sukey's curiosity was not satisfied.

"If Robert has no father and mother, where did he come from. Did he grow on a tree?"

"Yes, the devil's tree," was her aunt's grim response, "and it's full of such fruit."

When Mr. Briant came home, the exciting event of the morning was told to him.

"Who is this Robert?" he asked.



Sukey was called in to tell where he lived. She had found out during the afternoon.

"No wonder Sister Ruth didn't give you her husband's name. She is one of the President's plural wives."

"Why don't they call them all Smith and be done with it?" asked Aunt Priscilla. Noticing that Sukey was listening, she was sent from the room. But Sukey had heard enough. When she met Robert next day, she called out, "Hello, Bobby Smith."

"Let me answer your question, Priscilla," said Mr. Briant.

"Three of the President's wives were married to him before the law against polygamy was passed. Since then, up to the time of the Manifesto, he had taken another, in defiance of the law. Whether he will defy the command of the Almighty remains to be seen. But he dares not visit these wives openly, for he would be liable to arrest. You see now why his plural wives and their children cannot use his name."

"Are the married women here all doubled up, and more too?"

"Oh, no. A Mormon is entitled to one wife the same as any man; it is only those who can afford it that have more, and many who could,



do not. When we take our trip to Great Salt Lake I will introduce you to a lady who is a Mormon, and whose husband is a Mormon, but neither of them believe in plural marriage. She is the wife of Samson Orme. He keeps a dry-goods store where I often trade."

Sukey was destined to become the heroine of another event, but one more creditable to her than the affair with Robert. She came running into the house with a little boy in her arms. His forehead had a cut from which the blood was flowing, and his hands were covered with mud.

"Good Lord," cried Priscilla, "have you been fighting again?"

"No, Auntie. A big boy ran against this little fellow and knocked him into the street. He couldn't tell where he lived, so I fetched him home."

Miss Priscilla's womanly sympathy was alive in an instant. She stanchd the flow of blood and washed the child's hands, which were badly bruised. From her family medicine chest came sticking-plaster for the cut and balm of Gilead to soothe the little hands.

"See if you can find out where he lives, Sukey, and I will take him home. He is too weak to walk and too heavy for you to carry far."



Sukey was an amateur sleuth and soon returned with the desired information. The mother was a young woman. She held a baby in her arms while another was in a cradle by her side. Miss Priscilla told how the little boy had been injured and what she had done to relieve his pain. The mother was very grateful, and showed by her manner and language that she was an educated woman.

Miss Priscilla looked at the child in her arms and then at the cradle. The mother smiled and answered her inquiring look.

"They are twins — six months old."

"What are their names?" asked Aunt Priscilla.

"The one I am holding is named Maria, for me; the one in the cradle is Jane — for my husband's first wife."

"Then he was a widower when you married him. You're lucky. So many women here marry men who have a lot of other wives. It is a sin in the eyes of God."

The woman looked up, and said calmly: "It is their religion. It is God's command given to his chosen people."

"You are a Mormon," said Miss Priscilla.

"Yes. What are you?"



"I am a Methodist."

"I was a Methodist before I became a Mormon. I lived in the East. The men there are faithless. I would rather be a plural wife than have a husband who would desert me when I grew old for a younger woman. Mormon husbands are faithful. They have no cause to be otherwise. Look at your list of divorces — due, in most cases, to some form of unfaithfulness."

Miss Priscilla saw that she had caught a Tartar. But she would not give in as beaten.

"But think of your children. They cannot bear their father's name."

"What's in a name? Moses was a prophet and so is the President of our Church. In the time of Moses a man was called the son of Abraham, or the son of Isaac, or Jacob. My little boy is the son of Jason, my little girls are the daughters of Maria — some day to be daughters of Heaven. Their father would give them and me his name, but evil men have made laws that would subject him to fine or imprisonment, if our relations were known. No true wife would bring such disgrace to her husband."

That evening Miss Priscilla told Mr. Briant her experience. At the close she exclaimed: "I



give it up. Some women are such contrary critters."

Mr. Briant sat quietly for some minutes. Then he said, "My boy's name is Jason, the mother's name is Maria, and one of the twin's is named for her husband's first wife?"

Miss Priscilla nodded.

"Those names fit together pretty well. She is the wife of the Apostle Jason Orme without a doubt,—his third,—but he has a fourth, if rumor is correct."

"Are you going to have him arrested? Shall I have to go to court?"

"Don't worry, Priscilla. He would deny that she was his wife; she would deny that she was ever married to him."

"But she called him her husband."

"No record can be found of any such marriage, nor any person who will testify he performed it. Nothing can be done that way. We are in the hand of the Ammonites!"



## CHAPTER XIII

### AN OFFERING TO MOLOCH

THE same bells that ring out merrily for the bride are tolled solemnly for the departed. They announced the passing on of Jane, the acknowledged wife of the Apostle Jason Orme. But he was not a widower, for he had three living wives, even if they did not bear his name. The question in his mind was which one should be elevated to what the Gentiles considered the only post of wifely honor. As he had told the First Councilor, now President, Mary was not a good cook, and Maria had twin babies to care for.

He decided to ask the President's advice. The Second Councilor had been moved into first place, but the vacancy had not been filled. More important in his mind than his domestic affairs were those of the Church, and his life's ambition had been to sit in the Council and aid in directing the development of the "Stakes of Zion."

The President received him graciously and sympathized with him in his bereavement.



"She has joined the Heavenly host and is waiting for you. In time you and your wives shall reign over principalities and kingdoms. I have been greatly tempted lately."

"But you resisted," said Jason.

"For the time being. You know, Brother Orme, I am desirous of having you as one of my Councilors."

Jason knew that the President usually had his desires, but he feared the opening words presaged some opposition, and they did.

"I had supposed," began the President, "that my quiver of joy was full and that my four wives would join me in Paradise."

"Do you think of taking another wife?" Jason's voice betrayed his deep concern.

"I have not decided. Another Apostle is desirous of becoming a member of the Council. He has a beautiful daughter and wishes that our family may be more closely united."

Jason felt that the coveted honor was to pass beyond his reach.

"But I have seen one still fairer," said the President. Jason was silent. He could not ask a direct question; but the President rendered this unnecessary.



"When your son Samson was married, I met your daughter Flora."

He looked at Jason inquiringly.

"She is opposed to plural marriages," was Jason's reply to the mute question.

"So is your son Samson, but he may yet change his opinion. It has come to me that at one time your daughter was intimate with a young Gentile — that she even visited his father's house. The Church has declared many who have done less to be apostates, and has excommunicated them, to their eternal damnation."

"Samson told me that young Briant was at college in the East."

"Does he write to your daughter, and she to him?"

"I do not know."

"You could easily learn from the postmaster. He is one of the faithful."

"I will see him."

"Does she visit your son's wife?"

"I do not know."

"Your son will tell you. You have not that knowledge of your own family that you should have. You might neglect the Church's interests, were you in a high position."

Jason felt that the President was undermining



him, preparatory to blasting his great ambition, but his next words reassured him.

"I wish your daughter Flora to be sealed to me."

"You offer me and my family a great honor. I hope my daughter will look at it as I do."

"You intend to take Sister Florence as your acknowledged wife."

"I gave you my reasons for doing so."

"Suppose you make it a condition that if your daughter becomes my wife you will take her mother to your house."

"But if she refuses?"

"Then let her remain where she is, and her mother, too."

Mr. President took some papers from the table and began reading them. The interview was ended.

Jason Orme had never had a harder task than to broach the subject of a plural marriage to his daughter. He knew that she had had a hopeless love for the young Gentile. She had been intimate with Hilda who was a non-pluralist, and had had her way. This fact increased his difficulties.

He decided that he would not mention the mat-



ter to Sister Florence, but speak to his daughter alone about it.

He began insidiously. Woman may have listened first to the serpent, but man has learned the reptile's tricks. They were sitting together on the rustic seat beneath the peach trees. The mother was in the house suffering from a headache of which she complained — and a heartache, to which she never referred, but which told its own story in her colorless cheeks, weary eyes, and listless manner.

Flora was startled by her father's abrupt question.

"Have you heard from Franklin Briant since he went to college?"

She flushed, and answered, faintly, "No, father."

"He has not written to you?"

"No, father."

"It is well that it is so. He has, no doubt, found one of his own faith. Oil and water will not mix. Nor can a Mormon and Gentile live together as man and wife."

Flora knew this, but her heart had told her that love is not governed by creeds. All that she could do was to love, and be faithful, even if her lover had proved faithless.



## AN OFFERING TO MOLOCH    III

Her father's next question was,

"You love your mother?"

"Dearly," cried Flora. "She is my best friend."

"What would you do to make her happy?"

"There is nothing you could ask me to do that I would not do for her sake."

The serpent had done his work. The victim was ready for the sacrifice.

"You said your mother was your best friend. There is one more powerful."

Flora looked up at the sky above her.

"You mean our Heavenly Father. I pray to him every day to send her happiness."

"It is in your power to give her that happiness."

"How, father? Tell me how?"

"You know that my wife, Jane, has been taken home?"

"Hilda told me so."

"Does she visit you often?"

"Only this once since she was married. She is so happy."

"Did she come to tell you that?"

"No. To tell us of your loss."

"Then your mother knows. Whom does she think I will choose to take Jane's place?"



"She has not spoken of it."

"I am going to take your mother to my house as my acknowledged wife."

"Oh, my dear, dear father!" cried Flora in her transport of joy. She threw her arms about his neck and kissed him. Then she shrank back; it was years since she had shown to him any mark of affection, or he to her.

"I do this," said he, "by permission of the President; but he makes a condition. And if that condition is fulfilled, he will also make me one of his Councilors. If not, your mother and you will have to remain here, and I shall lose a great honor,—one, I confess, that I have sought all my life."

"I wish that I could help you."

"You are the only one who can."

"I do not understand you, father."

"You said that God came before your mother. But He has a vicegerent on earth,—the President,—and he —"

He stopped, for the girl was looking at him with whitened face and clasped hands. To the virgin soul God sends warnings of impending evil. Her father finished his speech.

"The President wishes to make you his wife."

The blow had fallen, but Flora bore it bravely.



Her soul revolted at the proposal, but she calmly considered the question before her. She could never be Franklin's wife. He had forgotten her. Hilda would upbraid her, but she had no mother to love and serve. When she had regained her composure, she asked,

“ May I speak to mother? ”

“ Not unless you accept the condition. It would only increase her sorrow to know that you preferred your own happiness to hers.”

Nothing that he might have said could have had a more potent influence. She would make this sacrifice to insure her mother's happiness. She would bury the love that had been her great joy and pride, and weep no tears over it. That was only a dream, but her love for her mother was a reality, and she would sanctify that love. No matter what others said, no matter what befell her, her heart would never reproach her for her act. But she could not say to her father, “ I will become his wife.” Her words meant the same,— “ I accept the condition.”

No date was fixed, and for nearly a month Flora kept her secret in her own bosom. It tore her heart-strings, it burned into her brain; but she spoke not a word to her mother, nor to Hilda, who came again, this time to tell her the hap-



piness that was in her own heart,—she was to become a mother.

One moonlight night she was in the garden, under the peach trees, when she heard the rattle of wheels. She looked into the road. A closed carriage had stopped before the house. Three men and a woman alighted and went in. Who could they be? Womanlike she had given some thought to her coming marriage. As her future husband was the head of the Church it would, no doubt, be in the Endowment House, the mysteries of which she was to learn.

She went back to the garden and resumed her seat. Two figures came from the back door and approached her. Both were men. One took her hand in his and stood with her beneath the tree. The moon was obscured and she could not see his face. The other man stood before them and said some words so fast and indistinctly that she could only imagine their meaning. When the ceremony, whatever it was, was over, the man went away hurriedly.

The one who had taken her hand said:

“Sister Flora, you are mine for time, and all eternity. Remain here until I come for you. I have brought you a companion.”

She sank upon the seat and closed her eyes.



She heard the sound of carriage wheels, and opened them again — she was alone.

And these few mumbled words had made her a plural wife — had shut her off from all her once fond hopes of love and happiness. This was her bridal eve! She shut her eyes; but Franklin stood before them, with a look upon his face that filled her with shame.

“I did it for my mother’s sake,” she cried, and cast herself upon her knees on the green turf. There was no response. She looked up. There was no one there — the cloud had passed away and the moon shone on her, as it does on the just and the unjust, the happy and the unloved.

When she became calm, she went in. She searched every room in the house. There was no one there, besides herself, but the “companion” who had been furnished her. The “condition” had been fulfilled, and her mother was in her father’s house.



## CHAPTER XIV

### A PLURAL WIFE

**F**LORA went to her room, but not to sleep. She sat at the window and looked at the moon,—so calm and peaceful,—while in her heart there raged a tempest of hate and loathing for what she had done. Hilda had been noble and brave and victorious, while she — But Hilda had no mother to make happy; then she reproached herself for her wicked thoughts.

The dismal night had passed and crimson tints in the East — where Franklin was — heralded the dawn of another day. The first day of her wedded life, what Franklin had called a “honey-moon.” But she had been spared her husband’s presence — that was some relief.

She went down-stairs. She looked faded and weary, as she was. She did not intend to eat anything. She was not hungry, but a savory odor came from the kitchen and her body craved sustenance. She would have resisted the demand, had not her companion opened the door and said, “Breakfast is ready.”



She ate mechanically at first, but the food was appetizing and well cooked, and at last she enjoyed the meal.

The woman, without invitation, had sat at the table with her. This woman was her servant, but she had no wish to assert her superiority. Had she any right to,—she, a plural wife? She had no husband, as Hilda had,—only a divided interest in one, a man, whose face she had not seen,—who had told her she was his “for time and all eternity,” then had left her.

Who and what was her companion? She had a right to know that. The woman was very old, and, at first glance, repulsive in appearance. But her eye was kindly, and there was a look of sadness in her face.

“What is your name?” asked Flora.

“I am called Sister Elizabeth.”

“Then you are married.”

“I was. My husband is dead.”

“Were you his only wife?”

“We who are called ‘sisters’ are not. I was one of four, but I was the first one.”

“Were you with him when he died?”

There was sadness in her voice as she replied, “No; the last and youngest one was with him.”

“But you?”



"When I was young, I was pretty — not beautiful as you are —"

Flora shook her head deprecatingly.

The woman added, "You see what I am now — what you may become, if you are doomed to lead the life I have, and live to be as old."

"Do you believe in such marriages? You know what I mean," and Flora felt her cheeks grow hot as she remembered what she was.

There was a sullen tone in the woman's voice.

"What difference does it make what you or I believe? We are Mormons. We must believe what the Church says is right, or leave it. If we become apostates, will the Gentiles take care of us? They wish to break down our system, but what will they give us in its place? It is easy to tear down, but hard to build up. Of one thing you may be sure — whether we remain as we are, or a change comes, it is the women who will suffer."

The day and evening were spent by Flora in fear and trembling that her husband would come. It was not until nearly midnight that her fears vanished and she sought her bed. A month passed, and her feeling of suspense had been dulled by time, that cure-all. One morning Sister Elizabeth said:



"I had word from the city last night after you had gone to bed. You will have a visitor to-day, — someone you will be glad to see."

"Is it my mother, or Hilda?" cried Flora.

"I am not to tell you. It is to be a surprise. You must look your prettiest."

Flora's heart beat fast. "Is *he* coming?" she demanded.

The woman had received her orders and dared not disobey, but she prevaricated.

"As I told you, it is to be a pleasant surprise. But rest easy. A husband, especially one so powerful as yours, does not think it necessary to send word that he is going to visit his wife."

This was not conclusive, but the woman would say no more.

Flora put on her blue dress and sat at the window, expectantly, during the long, long day. No one came. She waited until nine o'clock, then went, disappointedly, to her room. As she was getting into bed she thought she heard voices in the room below. That could not be — no one would come at such a late hour. She did not put out her light, but lay and listened.

There was a firm step upon the stair; a moment later her door was thrown open and a man entered, — a man she had never seen before. She



tried to scream, but no sound came. She was paralyzed with fear and shame.

“Are you not glad to see me, Sister Flora? I should have come long before, but my Church duties have been very exacting, and two of my wives and three of my children have been quite ill. I am on my way to Manti to visit the Temple there. I wish I could be with you longer, but can only stay three days.”

Not a word of love in his words, not a look of love in his eye, which showed only the lustful selfishness of man.

It was the night of the second day when Flora was awakened by a loud knocking at the front door. Her husband did not hear, for he did not move nor speak. Angry voices were heard, then words spoken in a tone of command. Still her husband slept on. Then came a loud crash which shook the house. Her husband leaped from the bed and ran to the window. Hasty steps were heard on the stairs, the door was thrown open, and three men entered the room. Flora saw and heard no more, for she covered her head with the bed-clothes. She was nearly suffocated before she ventured to lift the clothes and look about the room. The light was still burning — her husband was not there — she was alone — but why?



## CHAPTER XV

### WHO CAUSED THE ARREST?

THE accused was taken before a magistrate and charged with a statutory offense by the officers who had arrested him. He was released on his own recognizance that he would appear for trial.

A chain of circumstances, each trivial in itself, had led to the descent upon the house on the South Road. Samson Orme was pleased to find Sister Florence (now Mrs. Jason Orme) seated at the head of his father's table, an acknowledged wife; but he could not understand why Flora had not accompanied her. His business affairs, now in a most prosperous condition, and the expected addition to his family, prevented his visiting his father's house. Thus a month passed. He was now the proud father of a daughter, who had been named Amy, for Hilda's mother, and he was at liberty to make certain inquiries that were in his mind, the lack of answer to which troubled him greatly.

Alone with his father, he came decidedly to the point.



"Father, why doesn't Flora come to live here with her mother?"

"She prefers to remain where she is."

"What, alone in that house so far away from everybody?"

"She is not alone; she has a companion."

"Who is she?"

"A reputable woman,—a widow."

This evasive reply aroused Samson's suspicions, but he knew that it was useless to ask his father for further information. He must find out for himself. Hilda was unable to leave her baby and go on such a long trip. If there was no reason to worry, he did not wish to have his father learn that he had made any investigation.

The conversation with his father had taken place in his store on the morning of the day, during the night of which Flora had been surprised by the visit from her husband. Among Samson's Gentile friends was a young fellow named James Peters. He was inclined to be "sporty," as the saying is, and wore the flashiest neckties that Samson could be induced to purchase, but which were kept in a box by themselves.

"Jim, do you ever go over the South Road?"

"Every time I go fishing in the Jordan."

"Did you ever notice a house, the last on the



left I think, with a peach orchard behind it?"

"You're joking me. Don't I know that's where your wife used to live?"

"That's all right, Jim. My sister is living out there now. Will you take something out to her that father wants to send her? I'll give you your choice of neckties."

"Of course, I'll go. No matter about the necktie. You've done me lots of favors."

"Jim, do you know by sight any of the Mormon officials?"

"The whole raft,—the Prex. and his dozen 'postles. They make a baker's dozen."

"Can you go to-day?"

"I'd rather not. I'm going to take my girl for a drive."

"To-morrow morning, then. I'll have the package ready for you this evening, so you can start early."

When Jim came back the next afternoon his face showed that he had something important to communicate.

"Did you see my sister?"

"No, an old woman came to the door. She said Sister Flora was not up yet. That she wasn't feeling well."

"Sister Flora." The words rang in Samson's



ears. Why that name? She was *his* sister, but others had no reason to call her so — unless? Could it be that she was married? He was not obliged to ask the question.

“There was somebody else there,” said Jim.

“Who was she? Did you know her?”

“It was a man. I saw him in the garden.”

“Who was it?”

“You’d give all the neckties in your store to know.”

“Tell me, Jim. That’s what I sent you out there for.”

“Was it? I thought something was up, and that’s why I got up in a tree and roosted there more’n an hour before he came out for an airing.”

“Who was he, Jim? You shall have all the neckties. There’s a dozen of them.”

“It was the Great Mogul himself.”

“What! — the President?”

“The identical individual. I’ll take the neckties, not for doing the errand for your sister, but for my professional services as detective. Do you want me to follow him?”

Samson controlled his indignation until Jim had taken his pay and gone. Flora married — she a plural wife — and the President her husband, in defiance of the law, and regardless of the Mani-



festos which he himself had sanctioned and supported in public. The hypocrite! But what was to be done? He could expect no help from his father. At dinner, however, he did ask him a question.

“Are you very busy to-day, father?”

“Yes. The President has gone to Manti. He will be away for a week. The First Councilor is sick abed, and I have charge of all the Church affairs.”

Samson was convinced. The President had gone to Manti. He had taken the South Road, and had stopped on the way. His sister must be saved from such a life. No time must be lost. Perhaps even now it was too late. To whom could he go for assistance? No Mormon would aid him. Then he thought of Franklin but he was far away. But Mr. Briant was there. What an item that would be for his paper!

He found Mr. Briant in his sanctum, and told him his story. The editor saw what a weapon it would be in his hands in his warfare against those who indorsed the Manifesto in public, but disobeyed it in private.

“Can you — will you do anything to save her?” asked Samson, with tears in his eyes, and a sob in his throat.



"Leave it all to me, Samson. You must not be known in it. You say Jim Peters found it out? He's one of us. If he gets drawn in, he will say he was on a fishing trip."

Then he thought of the letter that Franklin had enclosed for Flora. When he had received it, he had decided not to deliver it. The affair could not end happily. There was a chasm that could not be bridged, unless the girl recanted from her faith. His conscience had troubled him, however, for he had told his wife and his son that he would deliver any letter enclosed to him. He had been to the house in Sixth North street and found it closed. He did not know Flora's address, so he had put the letter away and had dismissed the subject from his mind.

But matters were now changed. Flora's name would be brought before the public, Franklin would learn the truth, and that his letter had not been delivered.

"Samson, will you do me a great favor — not now, but in a few days, when this matter is settled?"

"Anything I can do for you, Mr. Briant, will be a poor return, if you can rescue my sister from that house of shame."



Mr. Briant took the letter from a private drawer.

“Have this reach your sister. Jim can get it to her without any one’s knowing it. We will bag our game this very night. Jim will show us the way. You must know and do nothing.”

Samson could not keep such a secret from his wife. She wished to go to Flora at once, but her husband showed her the folly of such a course, — which could not help Flora, but would implicate them irretrievably.

The next morning the news of the President’s arrest was known throughout the city. The *Star*, an evening paper, issued a morning “extra.” The Gentiles were jubilant — this was a master stroke. The Mormons were defiant, — and confident: God would not desert his representative on earth.

Samson read the *Star*; then he went to see his father.

“I know now, father, why Flora remains at the house on the South Road.”

“Yes, she is married.”

“And why? She was always opposed to a plural marriage. What made her change her mind?”

“She wished to please her mother.”



"Then you had a hand in this. I thought so. The President makes you one of his Councilors for a bribe, and you pay the price by giving him your daughter. Father, I am ashamed of you. Could you not take your wife home without his consent?"

He thought for a moment — then he said:

"I see it all now. You would not take her mother home unless Flora consented to a plural marriage, and the poor, loving girl made the sacrifice. When Franklin Briant learns of this, there will be a reckoning."

"I suppose you will tell him," said his father calmly.

"No, I am not a traitor. I am a Mormon; but the Manifesto is God's law, and those who break it must bear the punishment."

"Will God choose Franklin Briant as his instrument?" There was a sarcastic tone in this question.

"He may, father. All His creatures are but reeds in His hands."



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE MAJESTY OF THE LAW

ON Monday morning the judge took his seat and the court was opened. The accused sat in the prisoner's dock, his brow unruffled, and his demeanor calm. The judge was a Mormon, as were the prosecutor and the attorney for the defense. The magistrate who had issued the warrant was a Gentile, as were the three officers who had served it. The court room was crowded, three-fourths of those present being of the faithful.

The officers gave their testimony incriminating the accused; Flora's name was not mentioned; she was referred to as "a woman." The prosecutor called no other witnesses and did not cross-examine the officers.

The attorney for the defense arose. A sensation ran through the audience when Madison Briant was called to the stand.

"Your name?"

"Madison Briant."



"You are editor of a newspaper called the *Star*?"

"Editor and proprietor."

"Did you obtain the warrant for the arrest of the accused?"

"I did."

"In what capacity?"

"As a citizen of the State, who respects and obeys its laws."

"It was not done in your capacity as editor then?"

"My duty as editor is to print the news not to make it."

"But you made it in this case."

There was a loud murmur of approbation from the audience at this sally.

"From whom did you obtain the information upon which to base the warrant?"

"I refuse to tell."

"Was it from a Mormon?"

"I refuse to —" the witness hesitated, then said, "it was from a Gentile."

"Have you any objection to giving his name?"

"I prefer not to do so."

There was a murmur of disapprobation this time at the answer.

"It is immaterial," said the attorney. "Are



you aware of the pains and penalties for perjury? ”

“ I am.”

“ One more question. Did you send the Gentile to obtain the information? ”

“ I did not.”

“ That is sufficient.”

Mr. Briant stepped down from the witness stand.

The Second Councilor Jason Orme was the next witness.

“ What day did the President start for Manti? ”

“ Last Tuesday.”

“ Were you left in charge of the office? ”

“ I was, owing to the illness of the First Councilor.”

“ Did you tell anybody where the President had gone? ”

“ Many who came to the office noticed his absence and asked where he was.”

“ And you told them? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Did any Gentile ask you where he was? ”

“ I should not have told him, if he had.”

“ Did you mention his absence to any one outside of the office? ”



"To one person only."

"Who was that?"

"My son Samson."

"That will do," and Councilor Orme was excused.

The next witness was Mrs. Hilda Orme, and she came with her young baby in her arms. Her husband had cautioned her to be careful in her testimony, and not to say anything to incriminate him.

"Your name?" asked the attorney.

"Mrs. Hilda Orme."

"What is your husband's name?"

"Samson Orme."

"Where did he first mention to you the accused's connection with this case?"

Hilda hesitated. "I do not just remember."

"Try and collect your thoughts."

His voice was pleasant, his manner deferential.

"Was it on Tuesday, the day that his father told him of the President's visit to Manti?"

"I am sure it was not."

"Then it must have been on Friday, the day that the *Star* printed the particulars."

Hilda fell into the trap.

"No, it was the evening before."

"That is sufficient," said the attorney.



The defense had learned all that it wished to know. On Tuesday Samson Orme had been told of the President's visit to Manti. On Wednesday the unknown Gentile had seen him at the house on the South Road in which Samson's sister lived. On Thursday Mr. Briant, the Church's enemy, had obtained the warrant, and the arrest had taken place. Mr. Briant had not sent the Gentile to spy upon the President, but that Thursday evening, *before* the arrest, Samson Orme had told his wife that it was to take place! There was no doubt in the minds of the hierarchy that Samson Orme, the son of one of the President's advisers, had proved a traitor to his faith. He was worse than an apostate. He had planned and succeeded in defiling the name of the Church and of the Prophet who was at its head.

Their deductions were correct in the main; but not entirely so; but the exact facts would not have helped the prisoner. He had not gone from the city until Wednesday night, owing to the sudden illness of one of his wives. Samson had not sent Peters on his errand until Thursday, as Peters had an engagement on Wednesday, when Samson had first mentioned the proposed trip to him. He had reported his discovery Thursday afternoon. Samson had at once gone to Mr. Bri-



ant. The warrant had been obtained by him, the arrest made that night, and the *Star's* employés were called in early in the morning to get out the "extra," the material for which had been prepared by Mr. Briant after midnight, which shows that, although circumstantial evidence may be deemed conclusive, there are often unexplained discrepancies in its details.

Hilda was unconscious that her testimony had completed the evidence against her husband, and he was thinking of his sister's fate rather than his own position in the matter.

"The offense seems clearly proven," said the judge to the accused. "Have you anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced?"

The accused stood up; the faithful bowed their heads and breathed mute prayers to God in their leader's behalf.

His voice was firm, as he said, "In my conduct I am governed by the laws of God. The laws of man are contrary to his commands. In His eyes I am innocent; in the eyes of man I am guilty. It is no dishonor to pay the penalty inflicted by an unjust law."

The judge arose.

"The sentence of the court is that you pay a fine of three hundred dollars."



The faithful breathed freely. They had feared the sentence would be imprisonment. A score or more of the wealthy Mormons pressed forward and offered to pay the fine, but the offers were refused and the President passed the money to the clerk. Those who were too poor to offer such financial homage placed the halo of a martyr upon his head.



## CHAPTER XVII

### HILDA'S BABY

**M**R. BRIANT had arranged his business affairs so that he could be absent for an entire day, and the projected trip to the Great Salt Lake was to become a fact, much to Sukey's delight. She was the first one up in the house, and when called to breakfast came in, with an old tin can in one hand half filled with squirming earth worms; in the other hand was a limb of a tree, stripped of its branches and leaves, with a stout cord fastened to the taper end.

"I'm nearly ready," said she.

"For what?" was Mr. Briant's puzzled inquiry, as he regarded her outfit.

"To go a-fishing, of course," she replied.  
"All I want is some fish-hooks."

Mr. Briant laughed heartily.

"Oh, I see now. You are going to fish in the lake. You won't find anything living in it but a salt-water shrimp that is not worth the catching. You might induce one of the water-fowl to grab your bait, if you could get near enough to him."



Sukey was disheartened. She had looked forward to a day of sport. She had caught a hornpout once and had kept him alive for a week in an old pork barrel, feeding him a dozen times a day with flies and bread crumbs. She found it floating on its back one morning, to her great grief,—dead, probably, from acute indigestion caused by over-feeding. That was in her old home in Connecticut. The disconsolate Sukey emptied the worms upon the grass, threw her fishing-pole into the cellar, and took her place at the table, with an aggrieved look upon her face.

“When we get to the lake, Sukey, I will explain to you why fish cannot live in it.”

“Father told me the reason my hornpout died was because the water in the old pork barrel was too salt.”

“That’s the trouble with the Great Salt Lake,” said Mr. Briant, “it’s just like your pork barrel, only more so.”

After an early breakfast they started off,—Sukey, with her uncle and aunt and cousin Gertrude, the house being left in charge of the servants. The carriage held four; there were two horses pawing the ground and anxious to be off. A servant put a basket containing the lunch under the front seat, Mr. Briant grasped the



reins, Sukey cried "Get up!" in which she was joined by a dozen or more children who were gathered upon the sidewalk, and the journey was begun.

"It's a good twelve miles," said Mr. Briant to Miss Priscilla, "but we'll give the horses a long rest at the lake; and, on our way back, we'll pay that promised visit to Mrs. Samson Orme. I want to see that baby that her husband talks so much about."

Sukey's eyes brightened. She was more interested in babies than in fish, and her early morning disappointment was forgotten.

As they were nearing the lake, Sukey cried, "Oh, see the big hills."

"Those are the Wahsatch mountains. We are nearly five thousand feet above the sea-level."

"The road wasn't steep," said Miss Priscilla. "Not half as hilly as it is at home."

"I don't mean that," said Mr. Briant. "What I mean is this: if the Pacific ocean should come rolling in toward us, where we are now would be nearly a mile up in the air above it."

"Is it as big as the ocean?" asked Sukey, with wondering eyes, as she looked at the lake.

"No, it covers about twenty-five hundred



square miles — it's about half as large as the whole State of Connecticut."

They reached the lake, and ate their lunch near the shore. Sukey wished to taste the water, but her aunt sternly forbade her doing so.

"You don't want to die the way the hornpout did, do you?" her aunt asked, and Sukey lost all desire to imbibe.

Mr. Briant, being an editor, was acquainted with statistics of all kinds.

"It used to contain about twenty-three per cent. salt, but so much fresh water comes into the lake from the river Jordan that the salt has fallen to fifteen per cent."

"How salt is that?" asked Sukey, to whom "per cent." was an unknown and incomprehensible term.

Her uncle answered, "Well, if you should take twenty-one teaspoonfuls of fresh water and put in three teaspoonfuls of salt, you'd have Great Salt Lake water right in your own house."

On their way home Sukey, who was on the front seat, seemed very nervous and glanced anxiously right and left at each street as they passed it.

"What are you looking for?" her uncle said.

"You haven't forgotten that baby, have you?"



"Oh, no. That baby is several miles from here, but I promise you not to go by Sixth North street when we come to it."

Sukey was pacified, but waited impatiently.

At last they turned into a side street, but the speed of the horses was not slackened.

"Where's the house?" cried Sukey unable to restrain her feelings any longer.

"The last one on the right," was the reply, and in a few minutes they drew up before it.

Hilda had met Mr. Briant many times, and her husband often spoke of him, and she welcomed her visitors cordially. The usual commonplaces about health and the weather were said; then the conversation lagged.

"My niece here is very anxious to see something that you possess, Mrs. Orme," said Mr. Briant.

"What is it, dear?" and Hilda looked smilingly at Sukey, who seemed abashed.

"Don't be foolish, child," and Miss Priscilla's look was not a smile.

"The baby," said Sukey faintly.

Hilda left the room, but returned quickly, bearing little Amy in her arms.

"She doesn't look like me, nor like her father. Whom do you think she resembles, Mr. Briant?"



That letter came to his mind again. The child was the image, in many respects, of Flora Orme — the same blue eyes, light hair, and fair skin.

"She makes me think of Flora," said he. "Have you seen her since the —" he stopped short. He would not say marriage — but what could he say?

Hilda interpreted his silence.

"No, I have not been because I have no one to leave baby with."

That was a problem that he was unable to solve, but Miss Priscilla suggested a way.

"Would you be willing to leave your baby with me for a few hours some afternoon?"

"Can I come too, Auntie?" asked Sukey.

"You'd better wait until you know I'm coming," said Miss Priscilla, who turned to Gertrude. "Couldn't you get supper one night for your father?"

The young lady thus questioned expressed her willingness and her confidence in her ability.

"You see, Mrs. Orme," said Mr. Briant, "there are already three volunteers, and I will agree to do my part."

"It is very kind of you all," replied Hilda. "I am very anxious to see Flora and do and say what I can to comfort her, and I shall have per-



fect confidence that my baby will be in good hands."

Sukey was delighted and held out her hands to the baby, who laughed and showed her willingness to accept the invitation, and Hilda placed her in Sukey's lap. Sukey had a doll at home nearly as large as Amy and she knew how to hold the child in true, motherly fashion. Mr. Briant felt that he could now atone in some degree for holding back that letter.

"I will send a driver with the carriage, Mrs. Orme. He will take you to Flora's house and bring you back. That will give you more time for your visit to her, or bring you home quickly, if you have any worry about the baby." His conscience heartily approved his action.

"You are very kind," said Hilda, "and I accept with pleasure."

The next morning about eleven o'clock Miss Priscilla saw Sukey go into the pantry. Thinking she had gone for a cake, she asked no questions and did not notice her when she went into the garden. Very soon she heard some one coughing violently. She went to the back door and looked out. There stood Sukey coughing and retching, her eyes full of tears. In her hand she held a small tin dipper.



“What’s the matter with you? What have you been drinking?”

Between coughs Sukey managed to say,

“I wanted to see what the Great Salt Lake tasted like, and it nearly choked me.”

“More fool you,” exclaimed Miss Priscilla. “Get some fresh water and *rense* your mouth out, and then come in and wash the potatoes for dinner.”



## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE CONFIDANTES

“**I**S Flora Orme at home? ”

It was Hilda who asked the question and Sister Elizabeth who replied:

“ Sister Flora lives here. She is in her room.”

Hilda turned to the driver.

“ You will wait for me. I shall not be long.”

She entered the house and followed Sister Elizabeth up-stairs. The latter pointed to a closed door.

“ That is her room.”

Hilda tried the handle, but the door would not open. Then she knocked. There was no response. She knocked again, louder than before.

“ Who is it? ” The voice sounded muffled.

“ It is I,—Hilda.”

The bolt was shot back, the door thrown wide open, and in a moment they were clasped in each other's arms.

“ Did you bring the baby? ” was Flora's first question.



"No, Mr. Briant's sister-in-law is taking care of her."

Flora was silent, and the two girls sat and looked at each other.

Hilda spoke:

"I am not going to say, 'How could you?' I know. Samson has told me all. You are a noble girl to sacrifice your life for your mother's happiness, but it was a terrible price to pay. Have you seen your mother since?"

"No; nor my father. I am alone, deserted by every one but you."

"Pardon me, Flora, but have you heard from Franklin?"

"I have a letter from him, written nearly a year ago. It came too late."

She bowed her head, and the tears fell.

"Where had it been all that time — in the post-office?"

"No; there was no stamp upon it."

"It must have been sent to his father; but why did he deliver it at all?"

"I don't know. A young man brought it. I asked no questions."

"Was it important?"

"Oh, Hilda, had I received that letter when I should have done so, I would have



died rather than become the thing that I am."

"What did he say?"

"You may read it." She took it from her bosom — and Hilda read:

*"My Darling:*

"I am not going to blame you for not meeting me, for I know you were unable to do so. They took you away, for I found the house closed.

"How I wish you were with me in this lovely village. The pure air, the honest faces, and clean lives of the people all lead me to one conclusion,—I am never coming back to live in Utah.

"When I have finished my studies, I shall live here in the East. And forsake you, my loved one? No, but you must come to me. You must escape the fate they will try to force upon you. It will be a hard fight to keep them at bay until I can support you.

"Perhaps you will say, 'Become a Mormon, Frank, and do not take me from my mother.' If I did that,—and I would for your love,—they might force me to take a plural wife, as they may Samson some day —"

Hilda stopped reading.

"I don't fear that, Flora. My husband has a strong will. He has a good paying business, and many influential friends among the Gentiles. I can trust Samson against them all."

"As I would Franklin, were he mine. But finish it, Hilda. There is little more."

"'Some day'—yes, that is where I left off 'and then we would both be miserable.'"



"As I am now!" cried Flora, her tears flowing afresh. "Thank God he does not know what I have become."

Hilda read on:

"There is no safety for us, only in being beyond that influence that frightens weak men and ruins the brave ones.

"With my undying love for you and faith in you,

"Your devoted

"FRANKLIN.

"P. S. Write me at Boston — General Delivery. I shall be there in a few days."

"Have you answered his letter?"

"No. What could I say? Tell him of my shame? If he has not forgotten me, he must do so."

"I will write to him, and tell him the truth," said Hilda.

"No, no! I beg you not to. I am dead to him — to everyone, but you. Promise me you will not write to him."

Hilda promised, and rose to go.

"You will bring the baby next time, won't you? I so long to see her. Is she like you?"

"Not like me at all, or Samson either. If you had her in your arms, everybody would say she was your child."



"I wish she was — no, forgive me. I did not mean that — but I wish —"

"What, dear?" And Hilda put her arm around Flora's neck and kissed her.

"I wish I had some one to love all the time, and to love me — that I could take in my arms and press to my bosom —"

"And have it call you mamma as Amy does me."

"Yes, to hear it say mamma, and know it was mine — all mine. That is what my heart yearns for."

"Has *he* been here again?" asked Hilda, as they parted.

"No. I keep my door bolted. He shall never enter my room again and find me alive."



## CHAPTER XIX

### THE IRON HAND

THE President's companion was short in stature but rotund in body. He had a smiling, smooth-shaven face and kindly eyes that would attract children and gain the confidence of women. He was a missionary who had just returned from Idaho and Montana to make his report to the head of the Church.

"And you say, Bishop, that our Church is growing fast where you have been."

"Very fast. Our communities receive accessions almost daily."

"Which is the best port of entry for our converts from Europe?"

"Boston, by all means. They give their destination as Lowell or Lawrence, those great mill towns, and there is no question. When there, it is easy to arrange for their departure for the West."

"You have been very successful, Bishop. There are few workers in the Lord's vineyard who have done so much, with so little reward; but



there are vacancies above which must be filled."

There was a vacancy that the Bishop hoped to fill some day, but he was too politic to mention it. He only said,

"I work for the good of the Church, not for personal reward."

"The Church will not be ungrateful," said the President. "I am going to send you into a new field."

"Your command is God's will."

"What do you think of Arizona and perhaps Northern Mexico as a new field of endeavor?"

"We may gain converts among the women, but the men —"

"It is the women we want. They are the mothers of nations. Have you thought why our religion appeals so strongly to women?"

The Bishop smiled. "It is because I have thought and have learned the reason that my efforts have been successful."

"And what is the reason?"

"Because," said the Bishop, "they prefer to become the plural wife of a kind husband rather than the single wife of a drunken brute who beats them, or a loafer who allows them to starve. They prate of woman's honor. Her greatest honor is motherhood. Every healthy, right-



mind woman wishes to become a mother. They are not sensualists, as men so often are. Knowing that there is in them a spark of divinity that they can embody in a human form, they choose the path that leads to the quickest realization of their wish,—the Mormon religion.”

“You are a radical, Bishop.”

“All men would be so, if they were honest. They are hypocrites, from selfish reasons. They dare not speak what they think, for it might cost them money or social position.”

“You are to have a companion on this mission, young Samson Orme, the son of one of my Councilors.”

“Is he married?” asked the Bishop.

“He has one wife only. I wish him to have more.”

“I understand part of my mission: I am to find a Delilah for your Samson.”

“That is my wish — even more, my command. There are reasons why it must be so. He will be slow in wooing. You must aid him.”

“I have been successful in winning, but not in keeping. I have had three wives,—now in Heaven.”

“You shall be sent abroad no more after this



mission. There is yet time for you to increase the number of the faithful."

"Does my future companion know of this mission?"

"Not yet. I wished to see you first and be sure of your aid. Are there not in Southern Arizona or in Northern Mexico some women with Spanish blood, with great beauty, fierce love, and bitter jealousy?"

"Some descendants of the old Conquistadores you mean? There may be some left, but I fear they lack the fire of their ancestors."

"Find him such a mate, if you can. His present wife is a woman of strong will. She must be confronted with one stronger than her own."

"And we will watch the battle, but keep out of danger," said the Bishop, as he took his leave.

When Samson Orme reached his home a few evenings later his face wore a serious expression, unusual for him. He did not ask about the baby as was his custom, but ate his supper in silence. Hilda noticed his clouded brow and evident abstraction, but, like a sensible woman, awaited his voluntary confidence instead of trying to force it by impatient questions.



He did not mention what was on his mind until he returned from the store, nearly eleven o'clock at night.

"Hilda, dear, I'm in trouble."

"Have you lost some money?"

"No. My business was never more prosperous — that's the reason it is so hard to leave it."

"Leave it?" cried Hilda. "Why should you leave it?"

"Perhaps you do not know, or have forgotten as I had in our present happiness, that every Mormon — man I mean — is required to spend time in missionary work for the advancement of the Church."

A chill struck to Hilda's heart.

"Yes, I knew it; but my father refused to go when sent."

"And paid the penalty, did he not? Was he not ruined by the power that he defied?"

"Yes, he was, and —"

"As I shall be, Hilda, unless I obey the Church's commands."

"What are they, Samson? Do not keep me in suspense."

"I am to be sent to Arizona and Mexico with the Bishop."

"For how long?"



"The usual time is two years, but the will of the President determines its length. He can make it for life, if he chooses."

"What does your father say?"

"That I must go. Our family has been highly honored. Six of my brothers have been given high positions in the hierarchy, and my father is a Councilor. I am his only son who has never been sent on a mission."

Hilda remained practical. She was not one to indulge in hysterics or useless lamentations.

"And your business while you are away?"

"The President will conduct it in my name."

"And my support?"

"You will receive what you do from me. I gave the President a statement of my home expenses."

"Was he pleasant about it?"

"He was very genial. He said he regretted sending me, but there were complaints of favoritism to me. He said he mentioned the subject to my father, and he suggested that I be sent on a mission."

Hilda was silent for a time. "Did you ask your father what he said to the President?"

"No. Was it not sufficient if my father told me I must go?"



Woman is more suspicious than man, because her intuition is more acute than his reasoning. She reaches conclusions like a lightning flash, while he arrives only after a long consideration.

“Samson, do you think this is a plot to get you away from me—to make me unhappy? The President does not like me—I am too outspoken in my opposition to plural marriage. Then, too, you have opposed a cardinal principle of the Mormon religion. Why should he regret making you conform to Church rules? Was his regret caused by the fact that it would make me unhappy? He must know that it would. I do not believe him. It is a plot, of which you and I and our little child are to be the victims. I can see it all now. He has bided his vengeance, but it has fallen upon us.”

Samson endeavored to argue her out of her fears, and she, not to distress him, affected to be convinced.

When the time came for his departure Samson broke down. Hilda's foreboding had affected him more than he was willing to admit.

“Be brave, Samson,” said Hilda. “As you say, you are sent to do only what all your brothers have done,—what all Mormons are expected to do. Think no more of my fears. Women often



magnify trifles. But Samson, remember your promise. You made me your wife and said you would never have another while I lived. I hold you to that. Do your duty to the Church and to me. Then the Church and I will both be proud of you. Write to me as often as you can, and I will read your letters to Amy. She will not understand the words, but she will know that her mother is an honored and happy wife."

Thus comforted and encouraged, Samson went on his mission with the Bishop, who was to work his ruin, if it could be done.

Busy with her household cares and that of her child Hilda knew nothing of her husband's business, now in the hands of the President. Her income as stated by her husband was paid promptly. She did not know that in less than a month after her husband went away the sign "Samson Orme & Co." had been taken down and one that read "Deseret Dry Goods Co." had taken its place; that the President was agent for the New York Insurance Company, having reported that Mr. Orme had left the city; that Samson's partner in the salt business, having been refused the financial assistance necessary to carry on the business, had given up the undertaking and had gone to Nevada to seek a fortune in the mines.



Had she known these things, she could not have sung her baby to sleep with such happy songs, nor have written such cheerful, hopeful letters to her husband.



## CHAPTER XX

### COMPROMISED

SAMSON and his companion, the Bishop, started on their journey southward. Had he been alone, Samson would have stopped to see his sister, but the Bishop tagged at his heels like a dog. He knew that the Bishop was hand in glove with the President and that a visit to Flora would be reported to him. Hilda's words came back to him again and again, and he was soon convinced that his exile was to satisfy personal feeling rather than to benefit the Church.

He became more and more confident of this as they progressed on their journey. When they were alone together the Bishop expatiated on the merits of the Mormon creed, dwelling particularly upon the divine ordinance of "celestial marriage." To this Samson turned a deaf ear, making no comment. This apathy did not seem to disturb the Bishop, who returned to the subject whenever an opportunity offered.

One day Samson retorted: "Brother, if you didn't spend so much time trying to make a plural-



ist of me, you would have more in which to convert others."

To which the Bishop replied: "You remember the parable of the ninety and nine sheep? When the lost one was found the fold was complete."

They met with varying success, but many converts were sent north to Utah. The Bishop would leave Samson alone for several days at a time, during which he wrote long letters to Hilda. In one he said jokingly, "The Bishop is trying to find another wife for me."

When Hilda read this her heartbeats quickened and for a moment a doubt arose in her mind.

"Can he resist these constant attacks, like water dropping upon stone?" Then her faith revived, and the shadow vanished from her face, and the commotion from her heart.

In Mexico the missionaries found an unfertile field. The people were wedded to their old belief, and, after strenuous but vain efforts, the Bishop said: "This is the devil's vineyard, not the Lord's. We will go back to Arizona."

This they did, stopping not far beyond the boundary at the town of Calabasas. Here the Bishop left him for several days, and Samson wrote joyfully that they were on their way home.

When the Bishop returned he was in a most



amiable mood. He was so pleased about something that Samson, contrary to his usual custom, asked the reason for his companion's good nature.

"A convert,—one worth millions of dollars which she is willing to give to the Church."

"Oh, it is a woman," said Samson carelessly.

"A woman, yes!" cried the Bishop, "in form, but in heart and intellect a goddess."

"Who is she?" asked Samson, and still his manner was indifferent.

"Her name is Inez — Inez Delora. Her father's name was Wilde, but it is tainted with crime, and she has taken her mother's."

"What was her father — a cattle thief?"

"No, a wealthy ranch owner. He made a fortune in the mines. His wife was a Spaniard, ardent and loving. He was cold, and neglected her. He caught her in an intrigue and shot her. He fled, but was caught and hanged, and his great fortune fell to his daughter —"

"To be transferred to the Church," said Samson. "But what does she ask in return?"

"Only the advantages of our religion."

Here the conversation dropped, and Samson thought no more of it. The Bishop was gone for several days. When he returned he said:



"The señorita Delora has invited us to make our home at the ranch. We can carry on our work much better from there than here."

Samson objected. He preferred to remain where he was.

The Bishop smiled benignly. "Did the President say that I was to take my orders from you, or you from me?"

They went to the ranch and were warmly welcomed by Inez. She was a glorious creature. Tall and lithe, with a sinuous motion, graceful and seductive. Dark eyes, languorous in their beauty, but with the hidden fire that hatred or jealousy could bring to them. Black hair and an olive skin with a rose tint completed the human picture which no artist could transfer to canvas in all its loveliness.

Samson made a strong contrast. He was a handsome man, straight and athletic in build, Inez had seen no man like him, with blue eyes, tawny almost yellow hair, and a fresh, fair face in which the blood mantled as it does in that of a bashful boy.

They were treated not like pilgrims, but princes. The richest viands and choicest wines were on the table, at the head of which sat Inez, resplen-



dent with jewels in her hair, and on neck, bosom, arms, and fingers.

"She carries her ransom with her," said Samson to the Bishop.

"Yes," was the reply, "and all that she is, and all that she has, she will gladly give to the man she loves."

"But you said she was going to give her fortune to the Church."

The Bishop's reply was evasive. "She will when she marries a Mormon. For she will pay her tithes."

Inez had a fine education, especially in music. Every evening she sang to Samson, and he could not deny himself such a great pleasure. One evening she asked him if he had ever heard the opera of "Carmen."

"Yes, by a poor American company," was the reply.

Inez spoke sharply. "You should praise your countrymen — and women," she added.

"The one who sang 'Carmen' did not have a voice like yours."

The praise was hers, and she was pleased.

"Shall I sing you something from the opera?"

"I shall be happy to listen. You look the part and I know you could act it."



More praise, and she smiled. That smile, like an ethereal essence, surrounded him and reached his brain. As yet his heart was untouched.

She opened the piano and vocal score and seated herself at the grand piano.

"What shall I sing?"

"One of Carmen's songs."

She turned to the first page.

"I will sing that about the Wild Bird. Stand at the end of the piano and look at me as I sing. The song requires facial as well as vocal expression."

He did so, and gazed fixedly at her as the words came with the melody — clear, vibrant, tempestuous with the passion of love.

While she was singing the Bishop entered and closed the door. He leaned against it with his hands behind him, and listened to the song, watching Inez and Samson closely from between his half-closed lids.

The song ended, and Inez turned to Samson.

"Were I Carmen, and you Don José, and I sang that song to you, what would you do?"

"I should leave town the next morning," said Samson.

"And why?" Inez arose from her seat.

"Carmen was a woman, who, if her love was



spurned, would not have hesitated to kill the man she loved, if he did not return it."

"And neither would I," cried Inez, as she turned proudly away from him.

The Bishop walked to the window, which opened to the floor.

"I will go out this way."

He stepped out on the veranda. In a moment he looked in: "It is very damp to-night. You are warm from singing, Señorita; I would close the window."

Samson sprang forward to close it, and, as he did so, fastened it. Then he dropped the brocaded curtains, and they were alone, shut out from sight.

"And would you really run away from a woman who sang a love song to you — as if she meant it?" she said laughingly.

"I thought so, when I said it," and Samson shook his head, as if he were not sure then.

"Do many men in Utah have hair the color of yours?"

"I never saw but one, and he was a Norwegian. But many women have. My sister Flora has golden hair — not corn-colored like mine, but with the glitter of the real metal. My wife's hair —"



Inez started.

"You have a wife?"

"Yes, and a child."

"But the Bishop said—" She stopped.

"What did the Bishop say?" asked Samson.

"He said he was trying to find a wife for you."

"He is very kind, but officious in that respect. I am a Mormon, but I do not believe in plural marriage, and never shall."

Inez apparently ignored what he had said.

"Is your wife beautiful?"

"In my eyes, yes."

"Does she look like me—I mean, is she dark?"

"Yes, she is dark,—but not beautiful like you." The truth came involuntarily.

"I never saw a woman as beautiful as you are before."

To the olive cheek came a faint flush, and the dark lashes fell before the languorous eyes. Samson was entranced. She looked like a sleeping goddess. The modern Samson and the modern Delilah had met, and she was charmed with his hair.

Suddenly, overwhelmed by his passion, he caught her in his arms and pressed his lips to hers. She did not resist, and again and again he tasted



their sweetness. His eyes too were closed in the ecstasy of the moment.

There came a tap at the window. They sprang apart as if they were guilty and feared exposure. Samson went to the window, but there was no one there. As he turned from it there came a rap at the door.

"Come in," said Samson.

The handle was rattled, but no one entered. Samson tried the door. It was locked. He turned the key, opened the door, and admitted the Bishop.

"I tried to return by the window," said the Bishop, "but found it locked."

"I locked it," said Samson, "but I did not lock the door."

The Bishop's look was one of incredulity.

"Who else could have done so?"

Inez did not speak, but walked proudly from the room.

"You have compromised her," said the Bishop.

"Not if you are silent," said Samson. "I swear to you that I did not lock that door. Perhaps you did, you are so anxious to find a wife for me."

"Who told you that?"



"The lady herself. It seems you have confided your plans to her."

"And have you had no confidences with her? She seemed agitated when I entered the room, her hair was disarranged, and —" he took a long, dark hair from Samson's coat, "she has left you a token to remember her by."

"I have no more to say to you. I will see the lady to-morrow and settle this affair with her."

The next morning they met, but she was not alone — the Bishop accompanied her. The Bishop spoke first.

"I have talked with the Señorita, and she agrees with me. You have compromised her and must make reparation."

"I apologize most humbly for any wrong I have done, and will go away at once."

"That will not do," said the Bishop sternly.

"There is only one honorable reparation that you can make. You must make her your wife."

"I never will. She knows I am married, for I told her."

"She has joined our Church and she accepts all its beliefs."

Samson turned to Inez. "And you would marry me, knowing that I have a wife and child?"



"What did you say that Carmen would do, if she loved a man and he spurned her love?"

"I said that she would kill him."

"And what did I say then?"

"That you would do as Carmen would have done."

"And so will I. Come, Bishop, Mr. Orme and I understand each other perfectly."

The next evening the Bishop married them, and while Samson was speaking the words that bound him "for time and all eternity" Hilda was singing to her baby and writing a letter full of love and trust to her faithless husband.



## CHAPTER XXI

### A LAPSE OF TIME

THE reader must stand with us now and take a look backward. Six years have elapsed since Franklin Briant began his legal studies. Many events have occurred in the lives of those individuals in whom we are interested, and many changes in the community in which they lived.

Upon receiving assurances that plural marriages would absolutely cease, that the moral laws governing the rest of the nation would be enacted and enforced, and that the close connection of the Church with politics would be broken, Congress passed an Enabling Act, under which Utah became a sovereign State. The women were enfranchised, not, as later events proved, as a step in their advancement, but rather to form a solid bulwark of defense for the Church. Each head of a family of plural wives was like a ward "boss"; each ruler of a "stake of Zion" was a power in politics, and at the head of all was the prophet-president controlling heavenly



affairs with one hand and terrestrial matters with the other. The Saints were out of bondage and in their own land. With this brief retrospect with regard to the community, let us return to those whose doings we are interested in following.

Franklin Briant was a diligent student and won a *cum laude* for his college work. He had taken up his legal studies with the same ardor, had passed his bar examination, and was now qualified to speak in defense of both the guilty and the innocent. He had no fallacious idea that he would only defend the innocent, for he reasoned that such a course would make lawyers *ex parte* judges and deprive both guilty and innocent of a fair trial.

In the Gentile home, the lives of the Briant family had moved along with an even tenor. Madison Briant had continued his editorial attacks upon what he deemed wrong in Mormon customs and in the actions of the Church hierarchy. Miss Priscilla still oiled the household machinery and gave it impetus, aided by two young ladies, Gertrude and Susan, for the childish "Sukey" had become obsolete from disuse. Miss Priscilla yearned for her old home, or one near it, but she ever made personal satisfaction bow to duty. Susan was facile and made many



friends, both Gentile and Mormon. With the latter she had many arguments, which often degenerated into disputes, and even quarrels.

At breakfast one morning her uncle asked, "Did you tackle any Mormons yesterday, Susan?"

"Yes; Billy Redding said the men in the East were no good; that they were all tailors. He had heard that old joke. So I said, 'Perhaps it does take nine tailors to make a man where I came from; but here it takes nine wives to make a home, and then it is only an apartment house.'"

Her uncle laughed heartily at her retort. When he told the story to his assistant editor, he added, "And the husband is the janitor who serves all the families."

There was quiet in Jason Orme's houses, but in one of them there was no happiness. Sister Florence, or Mrs. Jason Orme, had not seen her daughter Flora since the night she had been given her full rights, in the eyes of others, as a lawful wife. To her repeated questions Jason had answered that Flora was well. When asked for leave to visit her, he said she had left the city, but would not tell where she was. Samson was away, and the mother was helpless and unhappy.

But Flora was still in the old home on the South



Road. Sister Elizabeth was not her only companion. There was a little girl who called her "Mamma," who loved her, and whom she took in her arms and pressed to her bosom, knowing that she was hers, and hers alone. Did the child resemble *him*? She did not know, nor did she care to remember. When the child came she had forgiven him, then had forgotten him. No, little Ida, for that was the name she had given her, resembled Hilda,—having the same dark eyes and bluish brown hair that hung in natural curls. She would have named her child Hilda, but Hilda said: "Do not think me unkind, Flora, or be angry with me; but I cannot bear to have my name borne by one I love, but who is the child of the man who caused my father and mother so much misery, and who is now working to ruin my husband and me."

Flora was not offended, and said:

"I will take part of your name anyway, for Hilda has a name within it — I will call her Ida."

The Bishop had reported to the President the success of his mission: Samson Orme had taken a plural wife. An order had come for Samson to remain at Calabasas. The President's vengeance was not yet complete. Not only should Hilda have a rival, but her child should have one also. And Hilda still received loving letters



and wrote them in return. She prayed that her husband's absence was the only trial that she would have to bear.

And what of Samson Orme? Did he pass his days in figurative sack cloth and ashes, bewailing his perfidy? Far from it. The abstinent Mormon had become a sybarite. His plural wife was a beautiful woman. She had played with his tawny hair, which she had insisted must be allowed to grow long; she told him that she loved him and lavished upon him every luxury that her wealth could procure.

The ancient Delilah cut the hair of the ancient Samson that she might deprive him of his strength and deliver him to his enemies. But the woman of Calabasas, unlike the woman of Sorek, knew her husband's secret, and it did not disturb her. He had another wife, but he was hers and she would hold him by the very power of her love.

While Samson lolled in this sweet slavery, he kept his secret from Hilda. He wrote of the great work for the Church and of his love for her; and what was still baser in him he read these letters to Inez, and they both laughed over them.

And thus he drank from a golden chalice filled with the wine of love; but, in his heart, did he not feel that a day of discovery and retribution must come?



## CHAPTER XXII

### A BATTLE ROYAL

WHEN Samson returned to the house in Sixth North street, he tried to appear natural, but he was a changed man. He could not serve two masters,— one to whom he now clung, the other to whom he was bound.

“Why didn’t you have your hair cut while you were away?” asked Hilda. “Were there no barbers?”

“The sun was very hot, and it protected my neck.”

“Well, you don’t need it now. I don’t like it. Do have it cut. It makes you look effeminate.”

What would Inez say, if he did as Hilda wished? He would not do it. The next time she spoke of it, he answered surlily:

“I prefer it this way. What would you do, if I asked you to have yours cut off?”

“If wearing my hair as I do made me look like a man, and belied my womanly qualities, and



my husband said so, I would sacrifice it willingly."

Samson did not comply with her wish, and this aroused the first suspicion in Hilda's mind that with that long hair some secret was connected. A woman loves a secret — not to keep, but to find out.

Samson was away from home often, several days at a time. Church business, he said, took him on these trips. He had no other business now, and must attend to his new duties to earn their living. As the remittances from the President had stopped when her husband returned she could oppose no argument against his statement. She had been alone many years; now she was so fully half the time, and her husband when there seemed to have lost his love for things that had once pleased him. Yes, there was some mystery in his past or present life and she would find out what it was.

Then something occurred that raised Hilda's suspicions to the fever point. He was away three nights in succession, but came to the house to dinner. Hilda asked no questions. If she did, she knew the answer would be, "Church business." She determined to follow him the next time. But she could not do so in the day — it must be at night. So she cooked a dainty that



he always enjoyed and insisted upon his staying to supper. She had allowed Amy to go to a birthday party of one of her playmates in a nearby house. There was to be music and dancing in the evening, and she was to call for Amy at nine o'clock.

It was half-past six when he left the house. She had less than three hours in which to discover — what, she knew not; but she hoped against hope that her fears were groundless. She put on a long cloak and a hat that shaded her face, and reached the street before he had turned into the broader highway. She kept him in sight until he reached the corner of First North street. She was so far behind him that when she turned the corner he had disappeared. She stood irresolute. He was on that street, in one of the houses — but there were many of them. She could not go to each and inquire for him; and if she found him, what reason could she give for seeking him? But she would not give up the search, and walked along the right-hand side of the street.

On the left there was a house brightly lighted. It was a fine house,— a mansion compared with the one in which she lived. A woman was singing. Such a glorious voice! It must be a love song. It was — the same one with which Inez



Delora had fascinated Samson Orme. But Hilda did not know that and had only kind thoughts and admiration for the singer.

She must see her — she must be beautiful. God would certainly give a face to match such a voice. She could not imagine such a gift in an ugly or plain body. There was a wide veranda to the house. She would ascend the steps quietly and try to look into the room. The curtain was down but was moved fitfully by the night wind. If she were discovered, she would ask for some one and say that she had mistaken the house. She reached the window unobserved and waited for a friendly puff of wind to move the curtain. It came, and she looked into the room.

A woman, richly dressed, sat at the piano. Her face was in profile. A man stood beside her and he had long, tawny hair like Samson's. It shaded his face. The woman caressed it, and laid her face against it. So this woman loved yellow hair. She heard her speak.

"My love, the air chills me. Please shut the window."

The man turned to do her bidding. As he came toward the window Hilda saw his face. It was Samson Orme, her husband! She gave one



despairing cry and fell prostrate upon the veranda.

A servant was sent to learn the cause of the disturbance. He found the unconscious Hilda where she had fallen, and went back to report to his mistress.

“What is it, Federico?”

“A woman has fainted on the veranda.”

“Bring her in here, and then get wine and water. Samson, you will find my vinaigrette on my dressing-table. Go and get it, and be quick, love.”

Federico laid Hilda upon a low divan and ran for the wine and water. Inez regarded the face before her and thought, “Some poor woman,—but why was she —”

Federico came, with the wine and water, and after him Samson, with the vinaigrette. The servant stood, awaiting orders.

“Federico, you may retire. And you too, love. I will call you when she revives.”

The servant rejoined his companions. Samson was left alone with his thoughts. He had heard that shriek. Could it be Hilda? Had she followed him? It could not be. There was no one in sight when he entered the house, and he had come in the back way.



Hilda soon revived and looked up into the face of the most beautiful woman she had ever seen. Flora was pretty, sweetly pretty; but this woman, with the wonderful voice, was grand, superb, majestic,—a woman that a man might worship.

“You are better,” said that wonderful voice, as melodious in speech as it had been in song. “Take some wine. It will give you strength.”

Yes, strength,—that was what she needed for what was to come, and she drank the glass of wine. It sent the blood coursing through her veins. She sat up. She was strong again—ready for the battle in which she was to win or lose. But could she hope to win against such an adversary? She must begin the fight.

“Who was that man who stood beside you at the piano,—that man with the long yellow hair?”

“That was my husband.” The voice was low and sweet, with that tone that indicates the pride of possession.

Hilda’s first inclination had been to be indignant—to be the wronged wife—and to attack her rival with bitter words. No, this woman was a lady, with a sympathetic heart, for she had been kind to her, and she would be a lady too.

“What is his name?”



"It is Samson Orme. Do you know him?"

"It is strange," said Hilda; "my husband has long yellow hair, and his name is Samson Orme."

Inez realized the situation. This woman had rights and they must be acknowledged. She had not indulged in heroics beyond her first cry, which was a natural one, of surprise.

Inez opened the portière and looked into the back room.

"My love, come here. We have a visitor."

He came in, with an expression on his face such as criminals have when they ascend the scaffold.

"Samson, I judge this is the wife of whom you told me."

Hilda started. Then he had not deceived this woman as she had first supposed, and had even hoped. She had become his wife, knowing that he was already married. Could such a beautiful body have such a cold, merciless heart? But she herself would restrain her feelings.

"Samson, you have done wrong to us both by not introducing me to this lady before. Why did you tell me that she lived in Ogden? I see, it was to explain your long absences."

She turned to Hilda. "Where do you live?"

"In Sixth North street."



"Only five streets away," and Inez laughed.

"Sir, you are to blame. You owe us both an apology."

Hilda resented the tone and words. The first was patronizing; the second placed this plural wife on an equality with herself.

"This is no time for pleasantry, and no apology will atone for the wrong done me."

"What wrong?" asked Inez calmly.

"You ask me what wrong? How could you, knowing that this man was married and had a child, take away my husband from me and a father from my child?"

"I have not taken him away. I have a child too, a little darling boy, two years old. His name is Manuel — his father's name did not suit him — he is dark like me."

"But why did you marry him?"

"Because I loved him — that hair is my pride. I comb it, and caress it. He would not let me perfume it because you would notice it; but now I can."

"You do not answer my question," persisted Hilda. "I will put it plainly. Did you willingly become a plural wife?"

"And why not? I have joined the Mormon Church for love of this man. I became his 'for



time and all eternity,' because God says that such a union is right. When I die, I shall become a daughter of Heaven. He will be a son of Heaven and we shall live together forever. If you believe as we do, you will be with us and enjoy our happiness forever."

"But," cried Hilda. "I do not believe as you do. I am a Mormon, but do not accept celestial marriage as God's command. Instead, he has forbidden it. When this man became my husband he believed as I do, and he gave me his promise that he would never have another wife while I was living. When he was sent South he repeated that promise, and he has led me to think that he had kept his word by writing me loving letters. But for your song, which led me to wish to see you, I should not have found him, but have gone on suspicious, unhappy, but with no proof of his treachery. I thank you for that song, though it has wrecked my happiness. I am going away. I will never live with him again. You may have him. I give him to you. When he tires of you, he will take another."

"He dare not leave me," cried Inez, showing passion for the first time. "If he does, I will kill him. I have told him so. My love, do you remember Carmen's song? You should — by it



your wife here found you; and while I live to sing it, I will never lose you."

"If I took the life of this man who has deceived me," said Hilda, "the law would take mine, and that would be too high a price to pay for his dead body."

She faced her husband who had not spoken a word while the war of tongues had lasted.

"Samson, I shall leave Utah to-morrow. I shall take Amy with me. She is mine. If you wish to see her for the last time, come early. I shall take nothing but my personal belongings. You can keep the house for your third wife."

When she was gone, Inez said:

"You get out of it very easily, Samson. If you had treated me as you have her, you would not be alive now. Come, I will sit on the divan, and you kneel before me. I will comb your hair, that lovely hair, and put some perfume on it. It will make her remember me when you see her to-morrow morning."



## CHAPTER XXIII

### A DELIVERANCE

WHEN Hilda reached the street she found it was raining. The cool drops and the chill wind that was blowing were both grateful to her heated face. As she walked on the scene came back to her. There had been a battle, and she had lost. She had surrendered and retreated.

But she did not regret her action. She could not live with him again. How could she pass days and nights alone, knowing that he was with *her*? She was beautiful — she, a woman, could not but allow that — and her voice was melody itself. Who had placed this snare in her husband's path? Who but the President, who was her enemy? She had defied him at her wedding and he had taken time for his revenge. She was powerless, helpless, with only one possession left, — Amy, the beloved. That was what the dictionary said the name meant, and she had chosen it for that reason, and it had been her mother's also.



It was after nine o'clock when she arrived at the near-by house, and Amy was crying because her mamma was lost. But children's tears and fears soon vanish when a mother's arms enfold them, and Amy cried, "Oh, Mamma, I've been dancing." That was why the child's dress was damp from perspiration, but Hilda's cloak was drenched and would be no protection.

The air was warm and the sun was shining when Amy had gone to the party in the afternoon. Her mother had intended to bring a wrap when she came for her, but her troubles had driven even thoughts of her child from her mind. She thanked the hostess for the pleasure she had given Amy and, with the child in her arms, ran to her own home. Home? Was it any longer a home? No, only an abiding place for one night more — then, she knew not where.

The fire had gone out and the room was cold. She put Amy to bed and covered her up warmly. Then she sat down beside the bed to think of her future. She could not sleep, and she had her preparations to make. She would leave the house as soon as her husband, who had another wife, had said good-by to his daughter. No doubt he thought more of his son than he ever had of Amy.

She began packing up, putting everything into



a small trunk. What should she do with his letters,—those evidences of hypocrisy,—that had given her so much pleasure in the past. She could never read them again. She must burn them. They blazed up, but gave little heat. Burned-out love is cold. At last they were all in ashes and her love was buried with them.

She was aroused by a dry, shrill cough from the little one in the bed. She was at her side in a moment. She placed her hand on the child's forehead; it was hot.

"She had taken cold. It was cruel of me to expose her so."

She gave her some water, of which she drank a little with difficulty. Amy had never been sick. Putting more clothes upon the bed, Hilda went back to her work.

It was not long before the child coughed again; but this time it was sibilant, like the hiss of a serpent, and it startled Hilda as the sight of that reptile would have done. Again came the cough—harsh and brassy was the sound. Hilda was quickly at the bedside. The fever had increased, and the child's forehead was covered with sweat. She wrapped it up and held it in her arms. What should she do? She dared not leave her to go for a doctor—she did



not know where one lived. Yes, she would awaken the father of the little girl who had given the birthday party. He had five children, and he would go for a doctor. She laid the child on the bed, and put on the cloak that was still damp and cold. She shivered at the thought of going out into the dark night and the cold storm, for she heard the rain beating against the window-panes.

She must take another look at her child. The little one's face was red, her lips livid, and the nails on the chubby little hands were blue. The pulse was weak, but beating quickly. She could not leave her thus. She threw off the damp cloak, and took the child in her arms again. Its efforts to breathe were distressing, and Hilda wept in dumb, helpless sympathy.

The little body could not stand the strain any longer; its strength was exhausted. At last it lay quietly in her arms. The worst was over, and now she would get better. Hilda laid her gently on the bed and said, "Amy, love, do you feel better?" The child did not answer, nor did she move.

Hilda bent down — no breath came from mouth or nostril — the little heart was still. Her treasure, her beloved, the only tie that bound her



to earth, was gone. She was alone — father, mother, husband, child, all gone. The tears fell freely. She was repentant — it was a punishment from God for her sins. She had been brought up in the Mormon faith, but had not accepted all its teachings. No doubt she had been wrong to set her will against God's commands. For hours she sat administering this self-castigation. Then she arose and went to a bookcase that held some volumes that had belonged to her father and which she had treasured. As she read the titles she found one called "The Family Physician." She found that one chapter was devoted to the diseases of children. She read on, but there were no symptoms like those shown by Amy until she came to *Croup*. Then she understood. With the knowledge came a revulsion. God had not caused her child's death. It was due to natural causes. Anyone's child, no matter how good Mormons their parents were, would have died under similar conditions.

But she would not take all the blame. If her husband had been true to her, this would not have happened. She had been neglectful of her child, but it was his fault that had made her so. The tears were dried up, and the mother's heart turned to stone. The Church had done this.



The Church was her enemy, and henceforth she would be an enemy of the Church that had taken from her all that she loved. And the man who had done this was Flora's husband. Oh God, what a mockery life was!

It was ten o'clock the next morning when her husband came. He tried to be genial; perhaps his wife had changed her mind during the night. She must recognize that what had been done could not be undone, and she must decide to make the best of it; so he greeted her with,

"How are you this morning, Hilda,—feeling better?"

"That does not matter. You came to see Amy. When you have done so, we part forever."

"As friends?"

"No."

"As enemies?"

"No — as nothing. We are nothing to each other — that is the only name for it."

He said no more, but went to the bedside. Hilda had put Amy in the bed again. Her eyes were closed and the dull red in her cheeks had softened to a faint pink, and she seemed to be asleep.

"It is late. Why is she not up?"



"She went to a party last night. She was very tired, so I did not awaken her. But you may do so. It will be for the last time."

"Amy! Amy! Wake up and speak to Papa."

There was no sign of motion.

"She is sleeping very soundly," said he.

"Yes," said Hilda. "Her last sleep. You came too late. Put your hand on her forehead."

He did so, and shrank back.

"She is dead!"

"Yes, she is dead. It is a great deliverance."

"You seem glad that she is dead."

"Glad to lose the only one I loved,—the only one who loved me? Not glad, oh, no! But there are fates worse than death. If she had lived, her lot might have been like mine—discarded—cast out into the world."

"Don't be foolish, Hilda. This is your house. I will spend half of my time with you. Mothers have lost children and have had others."

"Say no more, Samson. As soon as Amy is buried, I shall go away. You will never see me again."

"But you have no money."

"If I did not have a dollar, I would take none from you. What was given me, while I



thought you faithful, is mine. I have been economical and have saved much of it,—all that I shall need until I find some way of earning my own living.”

“And these are your last words to me?”

Samson was disappointed. He had expected that when her passion abated she would accept the inevitable. He had truly loved Hilda when he married her, and no ordinary woman could have shaken his allegiance. But Inez was a siren, and the strongest men, in all times, have listened to their songs and have become their victims. Hilda replied:

“I have little more to say. I have given you to *her*. I have only now to give you back your name, to bear which is no longer an honor. From this day my name is Hilda Bond. You may go now.”



## CHAPTER XXIV

### IDA

SISTER ELIZABETH had gone to visit one of her daughters and was to be away for three days. Flora was not lonesome. Her little girl was all the company she desired, but Sister Elizabeth relieved her of the heavy housework, and she was grateful for that. She was not very strong, and her close confinement indoors had reduced instead of increasing her natural stamina.

She had not heard from Hilda for a long time, having had neither a visit nor a letter from her; but that morning a letter had come addressed in Hilda's handwriting, but bearing a strange postmark,—“Chicago.” What could she be doing in that far-off city?

She read the letter twice. Hilda had given her the story of her life from the time she had followed her husband to the burial of Amy. She said nothing about her present life. She would be in Chicago for several weeks longer, and gave an address at which a letter would reach her.

Flora decided to answer the letter immediately.



She had little to tell about her own quiet, uneventful life; but she poured out her sympathy and love for her only friend. In conclusion she said:

“My heart goes out to you, Hilda, when I see my own little girl playing at my feet. God, in his mercy, might have spared you your only comfort.”

The letter was sealed, addressed, and stamped. She must find some one to take it to the city and mail it. She looked at the address: “Miss Hilda Bond.” Hilda had cast away her married life and was a girl again — all but in heart. The freshness of that could never be restored.

Flora looked from the window and saw a wagon approaching. It was on its way to the city, and the driver would take her letter. As she stood up, Hilda’s letter fell to the floor and Ida picked it up.

“You may play with it until I come back. I will put it in the fire then.”

She ran from the house, but the driver had started up his horses and she had to run some distance before she could make him hear and cause him to stop. He consented to mail the letter and was about to start up his horses when they both heard loud cries and turned to see from whence they came.



A little form, wrapped in flames, was running toward them, crying piteously: "Mamma! Mamma, save me!"

The man took off his coat and wrapped it about the child. He rolled her upon the ground. His beard was singed and his hands blistered.

"I will carry her home for you," said he, and he ran with her, Flora following speechless, and so weak from fright that she could hardly stand. When they reached the house, the door of which was open, they found the rug before the open grate in a blaze, but water was handy and it was soon extinguished.

"Have you any oil?" asked the man. "Sweet oil, I mean. If not, put flour on the burns. It will deaden the pain. I will get a doctor and bring him back as soon as I can."

Ida's little body was covered with burns. Flora covered them with flour, but the child moaned constantly, often uttering a piercing cry.

How had it happened? Easily explained. All children like to help their mothers. Ida had tried to help by burning the letter. It caught fire, but the flame burnt her fingers and she dropped it upon the rug. As she stooped to pick it up her short, flimsy dress caught fire, and she had run screaming into the street. When the doctor came,



brought by the man upon his wagon, the horses panting and covered with steam, he praised Flora for her forethought in applying the flour; but she disclaimed any credit, saying it belonged to the man who had brought him, and who had remounted his wagon and driven off.

The doctor dressed the burns and made them antiseptic.

"Will she live?" was Flora's agonized question.

"She will, unless she has inhaled the flames. But I hope that she has not. She will suffer much pain and must have an opiate."

He counted out six pills from a bottle.

"Dissolve one in a little water or milk and have her drink it. In two hours give another, if she is in great pain, but not oftener, for they are very powerful, and an overdose would cause her death. You are a married woman?"

"Yes," said Flora timidly.

"What is your husband's name? I will get word to him at once."

Flora hesitated.

"I do not know."

The doctor seemed astonished at her reply. Then she asked, "Are you a Mormon?"

"Yes."



“Do you believe in plural marriage?”

“I have two wives and shall take another as soon as my income permits.”

Flora repressed her disgust at his reply.

“I do not know my husband's name, but I know who he is. You will see him and tell him of the accident? He must pay you, for I have no money.”

“I will see him at once. Who is he?”

“He is the President of the Church.”



## CHAPTER XXV

### EUTHANASIA

“**W**HEN were you married?” the doctor asked.

“I don’t know the date. I had no means of telling. All I know is this — it was after the Manifesto.”

“I’m glad to hear that.”

“Why?”

“If the King breaks the laws it absolves his subjects.”

“I’m sorry I told you.”

“I will see your husband and come back again this afternoon — by four o’clock.”

It was then one. Flora gave Ida the pill. She soon ceased moaning, but was very uneasy and was suffering much, despite the opiate. At three o’clock the second pill was given, and at four the doctor returned.

“Did you see him?”

“No, he was not there. I saw one of the Councilors; but it isn’t safe to say much about plural wives, even to Mormons. Each man’s se-



cret in his own. Probably the Councilor has a wife or two that the President knows nothing about."

Flora disliked the tone of levity in which he spoke of plural wives, as if they were horses or cattle; but she was one, she reflected, and had no right to be sensitive.

"Which Councilor was it?"

"He's from Vermont. That's my native State. My name's Dodd, Luther Dodd. He said his name was Orme."

"He is my father. The only name I know to be mine is Flora Orme."

"Why didn't you tell me so before? I'll see them both to-morrow morning. I shall be busy to-night. The Mormon women are very fruitful. But how is the child? Has she been quiet?"

"She has been uneasy. She will not drink. I had great difficulty in making her swallow the second pill."

"You dissolved it?"

"Yes, in milk."

"I will examine her throat. It was probably burned and is very sore."

The examination was carefully made, but caused the child much pain.



"I'm afraid I must prepare you for the worst. Her throat is badly swollen, and the flames probably reached the stomach and the lungs."

"And she will die?" cried Flora.

"She might live, if she could take nourishment, but she can't swallow. I will leave you a syringe. Fill that and put it down her throat as far as you can. The liquid will trickle down. Let me look at her eyes."

He held them open with his fingers and examined them through a magnifying glass.

"I am not an oculist, but from what I see I think she may lose her sight."

He was a plain-speaking doctor,—not one of those who holds out hope when he knows that death will claim his patient in a few hours.

Flora knew so little about sickness that his words did not jar upon her ears as they would have done upon those of persons acquainted with disease.

"Doctor, if she dies, what will be the cause, the burns?"

"Primarily, yes; but the final cause will be exhaustion caused by lack of sustenance."

"Shall I give the pills?"

"No. She may ask for water or milk, if conscious, but not if under the opiate. Make her



eat. That is the only thing that will save her. I can do no more."

When he was gone the full meaning of his words came to Flora. She knew that the child's face and body would be covered with scars, as the burns were so deep. Then he had said that she might be blind,—and exhaustion from the lack of sustenance meant what? It could only mean starvation — a long, lingering death. The little body would dwindle to a skeleton. Oh, it was horrible! — and a few hours ago she had written that she was so happy, and had pitied poor Hilda. And now she was to lose her treasure and her comfort, and Hilda's letter had brought one tale of misery and had left another.

Her mind was full of questionings. Would the man they called her husband come to the death-bed of the child he had never seen? Would her father come? Would he tell her mother, and would she come to comfort and aid her only daughter? She must remain alone during the long night, for she could not expect to see them before the morrow.

She filled the syringe that the doctor had given her with warm milk and tried to force it down the child's throat; but the little one choked, and with a loud cry of pain threw herself upon her



face. To restore her to her former position brought more agonizing cries. An hour later she tried to administer food, but with the same futile result as before. Then she desisted. A mother's wish is to remove pain, not to give it, nor increase it. The long night at last wore away. The child was much weaker: she moaned but the sound was fainter.

All day long she waited, but no one came; no husband, no father, no mother, nor doctor. But he had said he could do no more. Sister Elizabeth would not return until the next morning. She could not pass another long night alone,—looking at that little body from which the life was slowly ebbing.

Yes, her child was dying from starvation; not from the torture of the burns, but from the pangs of hunger. Was it right to let her suffer so? If she must die, was it not cruelty to prolong her suffering?

The doctor had said not to give the pills, because she could not take food when unconscious. But she could not swallow it when conscious — and the pills dulled, if they did not entirely conquer, the pain. Her mind was made up. Her child should suffer no more. The pills were very small, but, the doctor had said, very powerful.



She dissolved one in a spoonful of milk; then she added a second, the third, and the last one. They would surely free her from pain and she would sleep. When she awoke she might be stronger, and could take some gruel or broth, which she would have ready for her.

As she leaned over the bed she put one hand upon it to steady herself. It must have come in contact with the child's body, for she opened her mouth and gave a loud scream. That was her opportunity, and the spoonful of liquor was thrown down her throat. Then Flora went to make the gruel and the broth.

From time to time she stole quietly to the bed. Ida was quiet — she was better; and the mother, her heart lightened, went back to the kitchen.

About six o'clock the doctor came.

"How is she? Has she taken any food?"

"No, she could not swallow it. It nearly strangled her."

He went to the bed. He took the child's hand in his — then put his face close to hers — then his ear close to her body.

"She is not in pain now," he said.

"No; I gave her the pills."

"One in two hours, as directed?"



"No, she was in such pain, I gave them all at once."

"You did?" and the doctor's lips closed tightly. "Well, she is easy now. Don't disturb her. It will do no good. Let her sleep — that is almost as good as food."

"Did you see *them*?" asked Flora.

"Yes — both."

"Are they coming to see me?"

"That I can't say. I will come again to-morrow morning. I am very busy. Children come faster than they go."

Flora ate some of the gruel and broth, for she, too, was weak from lack of food and sleep. Then she slept, for tired nature could resist no longer. She was awakened by a loud knocking at the front door. It was nine o'clock. Perhaps Sister Elizabeth had returned earlier than was expected. She opened the door.

"Flora!"

"Mother!"



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE CONFESSION

THEY entered the room.

“Is *he* coming to see his child?”

“No, he dare not. He must be protected.”

“But was he not arrested when with me?”

“Yes, but your name was not mentioned at the trial. No one knows you are married. I mean, no one who will make it public.”

“Then I have not even the small honor of being known as a plural wife?”

“Not even that, my dear.”

“Is father coming?”

“He has sent me in his place.”

Her mother went to the bed and looked at the child. She gave a sharp cry.

“Why, Flora, your child is dead!”

“I know it, mother.”

“But the doctor told your father she might live several days — perhaps a week.”

“Yes, mother, and then die of starvation. I could not stand that, and I —”



"What did you do?"

"The doctor gave me some pills to ease her pain — he said they were very powerful and were to be given only once in two hours. But she was suffering so, I gave her four at once."

"They must have killed her."

"Did they?" Flora's manner was apathetic. "I thought only of her suffering and the lingering death that was to be hers."

"Does the doctor know?"

"He was here three hours ago. She may have been alive then. He said he would come again to-morrow morning."

Flora did not seem to understand the real nature of what she had done. Prompted by mother love, the criminality of the deed, if such it was, had not impressed itself upon her mind. Her child was free from pain, and would not starve to death, and this knowledge gave her satisfaction. The awakening was yet to come.

Soothed by her mother's presence and comforting words, Flora went to bed and slept soundly her mother, as a watcher, by her side. The doctor came very early in the morning and was met by Mrs. Orme.

"Does she know that the child is dead?" was his first question.



"Yes."

"Does she know what caused her death?"

"I told her, but she does not fully realize yet what she has done."

"I came last night to try and save the child by giving it an enema, but it was too late."

"Could you have saved her?"

"Possibly. I can't say positively. What she did was all right from a humanitarian point of view. It gives euthanasia, or a painless death. But the law doesn't look at it that way. The law calls it murder!"

"*Murder!*" Flora gasped as she uttered the word. She had been awakened by the doctor's entrance, and, standing at the door, had heard what he had said. "She might have been saved. I have murdered her," she thought. She tried to reach the bed, but her strength gave way: she fell to the floor and became unconscious.

"This must be kept quiet," said the doctor to Mrs. Orme. "The President must be protected. If the Gentiles get hold of this he will be drawn into it, as will you and your husband. I will make out a certificate that she died from her burns — from natural causes. You must get her away from here. Tell her the funeral will be from your house. She will go with you. I will



see to the burial. Remember, the interests of the Church demand absolute secrecy about this affair, and your own interests too."

When Flora revived, her mother said that she must go home with her, that Ida, when ready for burial, would be brought there, and that her father said that she could live there in the future.

Flora made no objection to this plan. She was stunned by what she had heard, and allowed herself to be led blindly. Sister Elizabeth returned, and the dead child was placed in her charge, with directions to make it ready for burial.

The doctor, before leaving, had said he would send a carriage for them. It came, and the mother and the daughter were taken toward the city. When on the outskirts, the carriage stopped. The driver opened the door.

"I was told to leave you here,—that you would walk the rest of the way, as it is not far."

They walked slowly for Flora, though refreshed by her long sleep, was still weak. Suddenly she stopped. They were in the business section—before the building occupied by the *Star*.

"Don't wait for me, mother. I know my way home. I must see Mr. Briant, and learn whether he has any word from Franklin. He was a



friend of mine, you know, mother, a long time ago," she said with a sad smile.

The mother walked on, and Flora went up a long flight of stairs, at the head of which was a door, with a glass panel, on which was painted "Editorial Rooms." She opened the door and went in. Madison Briant was seated at his desk. He arose and came toward her.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### "I AM GUILTY"

"**M**RS.—Flora," he exclaimed.

"Yes, Flora,— that is the only name I have a right to. My husband never gave me his, and I have disgraced my father's."

He placed a chair for her, and closed the door leading to an adjoining room.

"How can I serve you?"

"I have come to be arrested. I am a murderer. I have killed my child."

"You are excited. You are not well. What has put you in this condition?"

"Many things. My child's death at my hands; my marriage to help my mother, and to gratify one man's ambition and another's passion; but, first of all, my failure to receive Franklin's letter when I should have done so. That has caused all my trouble."

Mr. Briant winced. That had been his doing.

"I am very sorry that I did not send it to you, if the consequences have been so serious."



But, you know, a marriage between you was impossible — and I thought —”

“You thought I would cease to love him — that I would forget him — but I never have. But he did not write to me, and I thought he had forgotten me — and I — but you know what I did. My brother Samson told you, and now he has driven the woman who loved him out into the world. She is a noble woman. She kept faith with herself. I broke mine, and am a criminal.”

“I do not understand. Tell me about the child.”

Then Flora told her story from the time she had finished her letter to Hilda until she entered his room. She did not spare herself, but made her act seem worse than it really was.

Mr. Briant saw that, like many repentants, she had begun her atonement by merciless self-accusation.

“You wrong yourself,” said he.

“You did not intend to kill your child.”

“Yes, I did. She was suffering so, and I could not bear to sit and see her die from starvation, — such a horrible death.”

“I still think you did not mean to do it,—that it was an accident.”



"I did not know it was against the law, but that makes no difference."

"Do you wish me to advise you?"

"Not against my wishes. I want you to take me to the prison. I do not know where it is."

"Your wish is a wrong one. You were innocent of intentional wrong-doing. You obeyed the maternal instinct that is higher than law, or ought to be. Say nothing about this."

"That is what the doctor told my mother. I know why he said it. He is a Mormon, with a plural wife, and he wants another; and my husband, who is like him, must be protected — that is what he said — *protected*. But you are a Gentile and know that the way they live is wrong. When my story is told and my fate is known, it may save others. Do you not see that it will help you?"

Madison Briant did see that it would. He was a keen newspaper man, and he knew that Flora's story in the *Star* would be telegraphed all over the country, and might awaken the home-loving men and women to take some action to end the evil. Then, too, it would bring the President of the Church before the public in an unpleasant light.

Then he hesitated. He could not bring him-



self to make this young woman,— one that his son had loved and perhaps loved still, —a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of others.

She saw his reluctance to accompany her and said:

“If you do not go with me, I will find the prison myself.”

He saw that her will was inflexible. He took her before the magistrate who had issued the warrant for her husband's arrest. Her confession was taken down, signed and witnessed, and she was committed to jail. Thus the curtain fell on another act in her life's tragedy.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### HER DEFENDER

FRANKLIN BRIANT stood on the steps of a Chicago hotel. He was on his way home. He had finished his legal studies and his diploma was in his trunk. Before leaving Boston, he had made arrangements to return and become junior partner in a law firm, the head of which was a man of fifty, who had been impressed by his oratorical ability. The senior partner would attend to the office practice while Franklin would take up the court work.

As Franklin neared the old home, old friends and old associations came back strongly to mind. But what of Flora? Had she married? She had not answered his letter. His father had not mentioned her in his letters and he would not ask him. But he loved her still. Six years is but a fleeting moment in the life of true love. A street-car stopped before the hotel and a lady started to alight. A coming automobile caused her to hesitate, but the conductor had pulled the bell. The



car started, the lady was thrown violently to the ground, and the car sped on.

Franklin sprang forward and assisted her to arise. She was not seriously injured, but was greatly shaken by the fall.

"Let me assist you to the ladies' parlor. There you can rest until you are able to go on."

The lady thanked him and was soon seated in the corner of a luxurious sofa.

"Will you have a glass of wine?"

"No; water, if you please."

Franklin brought it; then sat on a chair beside her.

"That conductor was negligent. You have a good claim against the company. You should see a lawyer. That is my profession, but I do not live here. I am on my way home to Salt Lake City."

The lady looked at him closely.

"Pardon me, but you do not look like one." Then she laughed lightly at her remark, which she thought must sound so strange to him.

"Like what?" he asked, with an answering smile.

"Excuse my careless, impolite speech. What I meant to say was that you did not look like a Mormon."



"A Mormon? Heaven forbid. I belong to a family of militant Gentiles. My father is the editor of the Salt Lake City *Star*."

"What?" cried the lady. "Is your name Franklin Briant?"

"It is. Are you from Salt Lake City? I am very anxious to get home. Do you know many there?"

"Mr. Briant, this is a providential meeting. I will bring no suit against the company now that it has brought us together. I was the wife of Samson Orme, but he took a plural wife, and I have left him. I have resumed my maiden name of Hilda Bond."

Franklin could not stop to express his appreciation of her confidence, but asked, his excited manner betraying his great interest in the answer,

"Do you know Samson's sister Flora?"

"She was, and is still, my dearest friend. I had a letter from her yesterday."

"Is she well?"

Hilda knew that he must learn the truth soon, what kinder way, after all, to impart it than by reading Flora's letter to him?"

"I have her letter in my bag. It is a woman's letter to a woman, but I am willing to read it to you," and she strongly accented the last word.



"You are very kind," said Franklin.

She read the letter in a low voice. He listened intently. His face paled and his lips became closely set when she read the closing parts about her child.

"She is married then," he said hoarsely, as she folded up the letter. "Who is her husband?"

"Mr. Briant, it is a long, sad story, in some way more bitter than my own. But I cannot tell it here."

"May I come and see you — this evening?"

She gave him her address.

"I have much to ask you," said he.

"And I have much to tell you," was her reply.

That afternoon the minutes seemed like hours to Franklin. He was to hear about Flora. She was lost to him, — but why? Why was her story a long, sad one, as Hilda had said it was? There was something hidden behind her words. His love was stronger than ever and to it was joined a resolve. If Flora had been unjustly treated, he would right the wrong.

He went to dinner; but most of it was left untouched, and what he ate was tasteless. Food does not feed the flame of love. On his way to see Hilda he bought an evening paper, which he put into his pocket. He was in no mood then to be



interested in other people's troubles, for he had a great sorrow of his own.

Hilda took him to her own room. It was in a boarding-house,—the kind that is called “genteel.”

“I will tell you my story first,” said she. “You will better understand Flora's when you hear it.”

She told how her father's property had been taken from him by the Church; how his family had been reduced to poverty, and she had been made an orphan; how Flora and her mother had been brought to her house, and the love that had grown between Flora and herself; of Samson's visits to the house, and their betrothal and marriage; how he had been sent on a mission; of his return and her discovery that he had a plural wife; how she had renounced him; then of the death of her child, and of her departure from Salt Lake City. In closing, she said: “Now I have a mission,—a life work: to preach the Gospel of deliverance from the curse of polygamy. I know not how it can be done. I am only crying in the wilderness. Some stronger mind, some subtler brain than mine must find the solution of the problem.”

Franklin thanked her for the confidence she had



shown in him by thus baring the secrets of her life, but there was another story to be heard,—one nearer to his heart.

“You have been very patient and kind to listen to my troubles. You will understand that they make me sympathize with others. In the first place, let me ask you if you wrote to Flora after you came east?”

“Yes, from Winsted, at my Aunt’s home. I sent it in a letter to my father. He had promised to have any letter I sent that way delivered.”

“But he knew that you, a Gentile, could not marry a Mormon, and he wished to discourage the intimacy. The letter was not sent to her for a year after it was written; then it was too late. She was already a wife, and a plural wife at that.”

Franklin sprang to his feet, overcome by his emotion. The blow had not been tempered, but had been a keen sword-thrust through his heart. He could have cursed his father, had he been there—yes, struck him in his anger.

“You must not blame your father,” said Hilda. “What he did was right from his point of view. Pardon me, but in his place, you would have done the same.”



Franklin controlled his feelings.

"Whom did she marry?"

"Her father's first wife died, and he took Flora's mother home in her stead. That was, apparently, a noble act, and Flora so regarded it. She loved her mother and was ready to sacrifice her own happiness that her mother might profit by it."

"I do not understand," said Franklin.

"You will soon. Her father was an Apostle, but he wished to be a Councilor. The new President had seen Flora at my wedding. He was struck by her beauty — any man would be — and he coveted her. But how could he win her? A simple plan indeed. Jason Orme was not to take Sister Florence home unless Flora consented to become the President's plural wife. She had not heard from you — she thought you had forgotten her — and she became a sacrifice."

"It was damnable — a miserable conspiracy," cried Franklin, "and all who were concerned in it shall suffer."

"I sympathize with you, Mr. Briant, but you can do nothing there. The enemy is entrenched. The fort is well garrisoned and provisioned. It must be a siege from without, not a battle within the walls."



"I shall go back and do what I can," said Franklin doggedly.

"Very well, but do not underrate your antagonist. My nerves are shaken and so are yours. I always have a cup of tea at this hour. Will you join me?"

He expressed his willingness, and she went to order it. When she returned she said:

"I usually buy an evening paper. The ones they publish here are so interesting. But my accident made me forget it—I was so anxious to get home."

"I bought one, but I have not looked at it," said Franklin, as he passed it to her. The tea came. As Hilda was sipping it, she glanced at the head lines in the paper.

"That is a line one seldom sees in an eastern paper," she exclaimed; "'From Salt Lake City. A Mormon Woman Murders Her Child.'"

Hilda read on. Her face turned white, and the paper fell from her nerveless hands.

"Oh, this is awful!" she cried, and burst into tears. Franklin picked up the paper and read:

"A young and very beautiful woman, known as Sister Flora, who lived on the South Road, gave herself into custody yesterday, declaring that she had murdered her child, a little daughter



named Ida. She was at first thought to be insane; but investigation proved that her confession was true. She is a plural wife of a high official in the Mormon Church, and her father is a leading member of the hierarchy. She will be brought into court soon for sentence.' ”

Franklin steeled his nerves to read to the end.

“Is it she?”

“There can be no doubt of it,” said Hilda.

“I must take the next train for home. Whatever her crime, she was driven to it. I will be her defender. Will you come with me? You can comfort her.”

“I cannot go. Give her my love — save her — but nothing could induce me to go back to that den of iniquity until it is purged of its greatest sin.”

The limited express moved too slowly to satisfy Franklin. It gave him time, however, to map out his line of attack. He would assail polygamy, the political system that upheld it as a reward for political support, and the financial system that sustained it, while making paupers of those whom the Church tithes had formerly kept from the poor-house.

When he met his father his anger had cooled; but his resolution was firmer than ever. He



calmly asked his father to tell him all he knew about Flora. He did so, and his story corroborated what Hilda had told him. She had not mentioned the arrest and the fining of Flora's husband.

"I will forgive you, father, for not delivering that letter as you promised to do. You did what you thought was right; but you have done us both a great wrong—you have wrecked two lives. She would have given up her religion to become my wife; and, if I could have won her in no other way, I would have renounced mine. I have studied history, and the bonds of religion have always been broken by the demand of a great love."

Franklin went to the jail. He was met by the jailer, who listened to his request to see Sister Flora. He shook his head.

"No one is allowed to see her."

"Why not?"

"That is my order."

"Who gave it?"

"One whom it is my duty to obey."

"You will take her a note from me?"

"No. The order is that there shall be no communication with the prisoner."

"That is contrary to law."



"I don't make the laws. If they don't suit you, why don't you have them changed?"

"I am her attorney. I wish to arrange for her defense."

"There won't be any. She has confessed. It's only a question of sentence."

"I shall demand a trial."

"Go ahead. The judge is a stiff-necked man, but he'll be likely to do what you tell him to." The jailer turned away with a sneer on his face.

Franklin determined to make one more trial. He followed the man and touched him on the shoulder. The man turned and said sharply:

"What do you want now?"

"Will nothing tempt you to let me see or write to the prisoner?"

"You mean a bribe?"

"If you call it that."

"Can you pay my price?"

"What is it?"

"I am an elder in the Church. The man I obey can make me a Bishop. Can you?"

Franklin turned away. He was against the wall of the fort that Hilda said surrounded the faithful.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE TRIAL

FRANKLIN demanded a trial, and the demand was supported by a vigorous editorial in the *Star*, written by him. The next day the Mormon papers favored a trial, notwithstanding the confession. The prisoner was a Mormon and entitled to the benefit of any extenuating circumstances that might be brought out at the hearing of the case.

The judge, a devout Mormon, bowed to public sentiment, and fixed a date far enough ahead to give both sides ample time for preparation. The prosecution and defense kept their plans secret; the clash was to come in open court.

In none of the newspapers had the President been mentioned by name, nor had he been directly referred to. He was "a high official in the Church," but many could be so designated. However, Franklin had determined to *subpæna* Flora's husband as a witness for the defense. For that reason the *Star* had been guarded in its



attacks, so as not to arouse suspicion of the contemplated movement.

The court room was crowded: hundreds of tense, eager faces watched every movement and quickened ears listened for the first words to be spoken.

The prisoner, dressed in black, her face veiled, sat in the dock. The room was warm, and Flora lifted her veil and turned her sweet, sad face toward the spectators. All eyes were fixed upon the woman who had killed her child. They did not look behind the fact. But Franklin Briant was waiting to give them the cause, the motive, the constitution of society that made such an act possible.

The prosecutor arose, and all expected a bitter arraignment of the prisoner. What could be said in her defense? She had dishonored the Church, the Mormons thought, and should suffer for her crime.

The prosecutor's opening remarks were surprising to all.

"May it please your Honor, before opening the trial, I wish to read an affidavit from Dr. Dodd, which has a very important bearing on the case."



Franklin objected. When asked to state his objection he said:

“Why should not Dr. Dodd be present in court? I may wish to cross-examine him.”

The prosecutor replied: “Your Honor, Dr. Dodd is ill in bed, and I have a medical certificate to that effect. The affidavit is properly drawn, signed, and witnessed.”

The judge addressed Franklin: “Your objection is overruled. The affidavit may be read before proceeding with the case.”

In his affidavit Dr. Dodd certified that he had been called professionally to attend a child that had been accidentally burned, that he had relieved its sufferings, and had given to the mother a mild sedative to quiet the patient and enable her to sleep. He denied the prisoner's statement, as printed in the papers, that he had cautioned her about using the pills, and said that if they had been given all at once they would have produced no injurious effect. He declared that the child inhaled the flames and that its death was due to natural and well-understood causes. Franklin saw that he had been tricked. The prosecutor had become the defender. He could gain no opportunity to use his arguments nor his eloquence,



unless he should become the prosecutor of the woman he had always loved.

The judge addressed the prisoner.

"What did you do with the pills that were left?"

Flora answered firmly: "There were none left. Six were given me and I used them all."

"I do not see that any burden of proof can lie against the defendant," said the judge.

"I am willing to enter a *nol. pros.*," said the prosecutor.

"I will accept it," said the judge. "The prisoner is discharged."

The farce was over. A physician had committed perjury, but it could not be proven. By that perjury the names of the husband and father had been saved publicity. Plural marriage had won another victory, and little Ida's death was only the result of an ordinary accident.

Oh, Law! how justice, between man and man, and woman too, is often defeated by the many disguises that you wear!

There had been no demonstrations of approval of the judge's decision. Perhaps the leading Mormons had been advised of its likely to be abrupt conclusion. It was a Mormon victory



and there was no reason for the Gentiles to acclaim it.

Neither Mormons nor Gentiles came forward to congratulate the prisoner. They were disappointed. They had expected "a celebrated case" and had been given a fiasco.

Yes, there was one soon at her side, and he was a Gentile.

"Where are you going, Flora?"

"Back to the prison."

"You must not do that. You must come to our home. My father and sister and Aunt Priscilla will welcome you gladly. They told me to tell you so."

"Not to-day. The law has freed me, but not my conscience. That still says I am guilty, and, in some way, I must expiate my crime. I must be alone to think. Come to me to-morrow morning. Perhaps God will have told me by that time what I must do."

With a sad heart, he left her, and she went back to the prison. The jailer, gruff and often insolent to Gentiles, was not unkind to prisoners of his own faith.

"You need not go to your cell," said he. "There is a nice little room next to mine that you may have until you are ready to go."



"I prefer the cell," was her answer.

He led her to it. She entered and he closed the door, but he did not lock it. She was no longer a prisoner, but a guest.

Through the dreary afternoon and the long, dark night she tried herself at the bar of her conscience and recorded her verdict. At dawn she made ready to depart. She thanked the jailer for his kindness. He said, "Good morning," pleasantly, and added, "Good-by."

Flora passed out into the world again, innocent in the sight of the law, condemned by her own conscience.



## CHAPTER XXX

### THE LONE HOUSE

SHE met a man early on his way to work.  
“Will you please tell me how to reach the South Road?”

He gave her the directions and walked on. He had no time to pass in court rooms, nor to read the newspapers that had contained her picture.

She had eaten and slept little while in the jail. She was weak, and the walk was a long one; but there was only one place where she could go and be alone, and that was the lone house on the South Road.

The sun was high when she reached it, for she had stopped and rested many times. She tried the front door, but it was locked. She went into the garden and sat down beneath the peach trees. Suddenly she sprang up, as if bitten by a serpent, and ran away from the place where the fatal words had been spoken that had made her a plural wife. She tried the back door; it was unlocked.



Perhaps Sister Elizabeth was there. She called her name several times, but there was no response. She was alone, and she was glad to be so.

She looked into the room where Ida's bed had been. It was there, made up, but there was no smiling face to greet her. It was all true: it was not a horrid dream as sometimes it had seemed to be.

There was no food in the house except a loaf of dry bread. She moistened some of it with water and ate it. She must not stay there. Only the sunlight gave her courage. She would be haunted at night.

She must go on — she knew not where. It made little difference; but Franklin must not find her. She could not go to his father's house. She was another man's wife, and the man she loved would suffer, if she consented. No, she must go far away from him and everyone. She wished she could go to Hilda, but that was impossible. She did not know where Hilda was, and she had no money for a journey.

Once more on the dusty, sun-burned road. She could not go thus. She went back and knelt beside the little bed. She prayed for God's forgiveness and for that of her child. Then tears came to her relief — the first that she had shed



since she had made her confession. She felt comforted, and once more began the journey, to which she could not then see the end.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE RIVER JORDAN

A ROOM had been made ready for Flora in the Briant home. Aunt Priscilla had prepared a nourishing breakfast for the expected newcomer, and Gertrude and Susan had added to the guest's room those little touches which gave it an air of welcome. There were flowers in a vase on a table, and a down pillow at the head of the sofa. The prodigal son could not have had a warmer welcome than was ready for the daughter who had been more sinned against than sinful.

Franklin had had a talk with his father the evening before. He had come to a fixed determination to go East at once, and to take Flora with him. Her marriage had not been legal. She would go where she was not known, and, as his wife, she would be safe from reproach.

"I love her, father, and have always loved her — and always shall."

"My boy, I have stood too long in the way of your happiness to oppose you now. I do not blame you for leaving Utah. I have thought



many times lately that I would sell my paper, and go back to Winsted with Priscilla and end my days there. Gertrude and Susan will think of marrying soon, and I wish them to live in a cleaner, purer, moral atmosphere."

Franklin had ordered the carriage to come at seven. He would not go too early to the jail, for Flora was tired and might sleep late.

"I suppose I may see the lady this morning, as she is no longer a prisoner."

"No, you can't," was the jailer's curt reply.

"And why not? What reason —"

"A good one, that will satisfy you, particular as you are. She's been gone three hours."

"Gone?" exclaimed Franklin. "Gone where?"

"How should I know? My boarders don't leave their addresses. They're too glad to get away."

Franklin recalled what his father had told him about the President's arrest. It was at a house on the South Road. Perhaps she had gone there. It had been her only home. He gave the directions to the driver, and the horses were whipped into a gallop.

With trembling limbs, Flora walked on.



Often she rested upon a rock by the wayside, and several times she lay down upon the cool grass beneath the spreading branches of some tree. In a certain way, she was happy. She was alone with God and the warm sun and the pure, fresh air that were His gifts to man. Then, too, birds were singing in the trees, and bright flowers were blooming in the fields. Far ahead she could see a long, white line that glistened in the sun's rays like polished silver. She must reach it, so she pressed on. The walls of the Heavenly City must look like that — and she had read that the streets were golden.

At last she came near enough to see that it was a river,—the river Jordan. She had learned about it in her school days, but had never seen it before. She sat down upon the bank and watched the stream as it hurried on to lose its sparkle and freshness in the briny waters of the Great Salt Lake.

She sat for a long time, oblivious to the world and to her own unhappiness. A holy calm had fallen upon her. For the time her conscience was numb,—or dumb,—she could not tell which. What fairer place to bid the world adieu, and go to meet her child,—that child that might now be in her arms but for her rash, wicked act.



What sound was that? She listened. Could a carriage be coming that way? Yes, that was the sound of wheels, and of horses' quickly moving feet. She ran to the road, and screening her eyes from the sun, looked in the direction of the sound.

Now the carriage was in sight, coming swiftly toward her. There were two men on the driver's seat — and one of them was Franklin Briant. He had found her — but how? Then she remembered that soon after leaving the house she had met an old woman with a bundle of fagots on her back.

Her thoughts chased one another quickly. He must not see her. She could not go back with him. She would rather die than do that. This was the first time that she had thought of her own death. But why not? It was the open door to safety. He was nearly there. Perhaps he had seen her. If he found her, he would not let her go. She would be unable to resist his love — his passionate appeals. She would not live to profit thus by her sin. She ran to the river brink, gave one last look at the man she loved, and threw herself into the swiftly moving river.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### “ A WIFE AT LAST ”

FRANKLIN had met the old woman with the bundle of fagots and from her had learned that he was on the right track. As they neared the river he had seen Flora standing by the roadside. He had given the horses a cut that sent them forward at the top of their speed. Fear took possession of him. Why was she so near the river? Did she mean to commit suicide?

As the horses came to a sudden stop, drawn on their haunches by Franklin's fear-strengthened hands, he saw Flora standing on the river bank, then he saw her disappear.

“ Come and help me,” he cried to the driver, as he cast his hat and his coat aside and sprang into the river.

The current had carried her far from him. She had sunk twice before he reached the spot. When she came to the surface for the third time, he grasped her by the hair,—that golden hair,—and swam for the shore. Jasper, the driver



aided him in carrying the seemingly lifeless form to a sunlit place. Franklin had learned at college "First Aid to the Drowning," and, with Jasper's help, applied it.

He had no stimulant to give her — only the warm rays of the sun; but they sufficed, and, after what seemed an age to Franklin, she revived.

Her first words tore his heart.

"I am dying, Frank."

He took her in his arms.

"Come back to me, Flora. You must not die thus."

"I am happy to die here in your arms. God has sent you to me."

"But you shall not die as the wife of that man. Come here, Jasper. Are you a Mormon?"

"No. I'm a Baptist, if I'm anything."

"You must be a witness of what is going to take place. This woman's name is Flora Orme. Her father is a Mormon, and she was brought up in that faith; but she recants, and abjures the Mormon religion. Flora, do you do this of your own free will?"

"I do, before God," came faintly from her white lips.

Franklin looked about him. No house in sight; they then were alone in a wilderness.



"Oh, this desolate place," he cried. "If she were strong enough to bear the journey I would find a clergyman and make her my wife."

"Would a justice of the peace do?" asked Jasper.

"Yes, but there is none nearer than the city."

"I am one."

"You?"

"Yes. I am not a driver. I am the proprietor of the livery stable. All my men were out, but you were in such haste I decided to come myself."

"Thank God!" The words were uttered by Franklin, as a thanksgiving, in the fullness of his heart. He knelt beside her.

"Flora, this man is a justice. He can make you my wife. Will you take me as your lawful, wedded husband?"

"Yes." She smiled — it was but a shadow — and placed her hand in his.

"Flora, I, Franklin, take you to be my lawful, wedded wife."

"A wife at last." Her voice was stronger than before, and Franklin took heart again. She lay in her husband's arms, her blue eyes wide open, gazing upward at the cloudless sky.

She lay thus for some time. Then her eyes brightened.



"I can see my Ida, and she sees me. Her hair has grown long again, and the scars from her burns do not show. She is smiling. She has forgiven me, and has asked God to pardon me. She is an angel now. I must go to her."

Franklin knew that the end was near. Those Heavenly visions come only when the gates of the Eternal Kingdom are open, and the glory shines through upon the dying.

There was a choking feeling in Jasper's throat, and, with bowed head, he turned away. He had seen many die, but they were in their beds, with their relatives and friends about them.

To Franklin the passing of a soul from earth was a revelation. He had always thought that death was terrible, but now it had a sublime significance.

Her eyes closed, her grasp of his hand relaxed. She who had been his wife for but one short hour was now only a sweet memory. He would never forget that when she died she was his, and his alone.

She was placed tenderly in the carriage, and the curtains were drawn. As they came to the lone house, the horses were stopped. Franklin went to his wife's room. There he found a faded blue ribbon, with which she had bound her hair



when a girl. He had given it to her. In a drawer he found the letter that would have saved her life, had it reached her in time. What were those spots on every page? He went to the window. They were where her tears had fallen. That letter was dearer to him than gold — those marks of her tears more valuable than diamonds.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### A FINAL RECKONING

FLORA lay upon the bed in the room in the Briant home that had been made ready for her. The flowers from the vase had been placed in her hand,—roses and lilies-of-the-valley,—typical of Life and Death.

There was a happy smile upon her face. It had been there when she died and had not vanished from the face that was now like marble. She had been forgiven by God, by her child, and by Franklin, who had made her his wife. Her body had been defiled; but her heart was pure, and the pure in heart “shall see God.”

Word had been sent to her father, and to the man who had made her an illegal wife. The notes were brief.

To the father:

“I have found your daughter. She is at my father’s house. Do you wish to see her?”

“FRANKLIN BRIANT.”



To the President:

"I have found the daughter of Jason Orme. She is at my father's house. Do you wish to see her?"

"FRANKLIN BRIANT."

They came together. Each counted upon the other for support in what they knew would be a crisis. But they were not prepared for what they saw when they entered the room where she lay.

"There she is," said Franklin.

Both men were speechless. What could they say? — the father who had sold his daughter for his own advancement, and the man who had bought her to gratify his lust?

But Franklin had much to say:

"Before she died in my arms she gave up your religion. She recanted in my presence and before another witness of my own faith. You may declare her an apostate and excommunicate her, if you wish. You cannot have her now.

"Before she died she became my wife. She was never a wife before. The ceremony that made her a plural wife was illegal by both civil and your own religious laws, and declared so in the Manifesto. We were married in God's own temple, beneath the trees and the sunshine. She is mine. You shall not touch her. You shall not take her from me."



Overcome by the intensity of his feelings, he sank upon his knees by the bed, took his wife's cold hand in his, and hot tears fell upon it.

When he arose he was alone.

THE END







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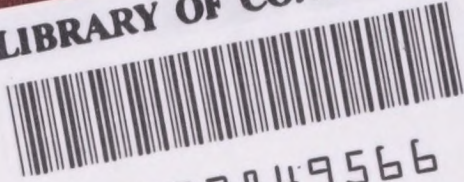








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